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Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk March 6, 2016

Mid edition No 702

SPECIAL REPORT

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Growing calls for two-tier system to switch to series of unitaries

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Second chance for fallen school communities?

CHANCES are, a major secondary school near you has been forced to close in recent years.

As an adult, it's easy to tut, complain about the standard of teaching, and believe the institution is entirely to blame for its own failings.

And a lot of the time, of course, it will be. How many times do we hear these days that a good school is only as strong as the leaders that run it; the heads who impose a level of discipline which we consider suitable; that demand a standard of teaching which ensures all students get the best possible chance of fulfilling their potential? Without it, a school is forced into mere mediocrity or failure.

But the community must bear some responsibility too; the parents who don't assist the teaching process, who believe the best respect for a teacher is no

respect. Those who believe a strict head is one to fight at every turn and a weak one there to exploit.

Kent has seen its fair share of schools collapse in recent years and each one is a tragedy. Every school is its own micro community. And so powerful can it be, that years later most of us will still identify with the badge of where we spent our formative years.

This week, our regular education advisor, Peter Read, suggests the county needs another 1,500

secondary places in the next three years. A simple solution to that would be reviving some of those schools which we all thought were dead. Which gives those communities another chance; another opportunity to actively support the efforts of schools and all pull together to deliver a future generation which excels.

Let's hope we all grasp it.



Editor **Chris Britcher**

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




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Kent needs 1,500 more school places, says expert

By Chris Britcher

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AS PARENTS across the county discovered which secondary school their child will be attending in September, a former headteacher says the county is going to need to increase capacity by another 1,500 places within three years.

More children than ever applied for a place in a Kent secondary school this year, with 18,797 applications received, an increase of more than 600 over last year, Kent County Council (KCC) revealed.

However, despite the increase in applications, 363 more Kent children will get their first preference of secondary school for September compared with last year and over 97 per cent will receive an offer from one of their four preferences. However, 428 received none of their preferences.

Roger Gough, KCC's education chief, said: "School allocations can only be made after all preferences have been satisfied, and sadly there are always instances where we are unable to offer parents one of their preferred schools.

"We cannot therefore underesti-



RETURNING? The Chaucer Technology school in Canterbury - currently mothballed after closure

mate the disappointment felt by the 428 children who will be allocated a school by the local authority.

"We would, however, encourage them to not immediately discount the schools offered and to first visit the schools in question before taking any decisions."

In Medway, nearly 97.5 per cent were offered one of their preference places of the 3,526 children who applied for schools in the area.

But education advisor and former

Gravesend head Peter Read, says the challenge may only just be beginning. He said: "With the increasing demand for school places, Kent will have to increase its capacity with another 1,500 children expected to be looking for secondary places within three years, not counting inward migration.

"For 2016 entry, an additional 704 additional places have been created, but one wonders how much longer this approach can continue."

He said in Canterbury, non-selectives the Canterbury Academy, St Anselm's and Spires were all full, despite expansion; caused in part by the closure of Chaucer Technology two years ago.

However, where pupils had previously been diverted to the Community College Whitstable, problems there may mean KCC accelerates what to do with the Chaucer site in order to ease the pressure in the city.

NHS says garden city to be one of 10 'healthy new town' role models

THE multi-million pound Ebbsfleet Garden City is to be one of 10 areas around the country to be given 'healthy new town' status by the NHS.

It means the garden city will lead the way – and be held up as a role model – for being a healthy community that promotes good lifestyle choices.

The project – one of only ten announced by NHS England this week – will be a joint partnership with Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley CCG.

Michael Cassidy, CBE, chairman of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, which is accelerating the development of up to 15,000 homes in Britain's first garden city for 100 years, said: "This is an important milestone in the development of Ebbsfleet Garden City and we are delighted to be part of an initiative that will encourage healthy lifestyles in the 21st century.

"We look forward to working with NHS England as we drive forward our garden city. Having healthy new

town status is a positive move forward with all that it can bring in health care innovation in developing communities."

As the garden city moves forward, the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation will help create opportunities for play, sport and recreation including connected cycle tracks, open air gyms, dog walking trails and schools that children and parents can walk to.

It wants to create an accessible and healthy community for current and future generations to enjoy.

There will also be a specific focus on keeping older people independent and healthy, supported by the latest technology, to help them live in their own homes for longer.

Multi-functional green spaces, high quality leisure facilities and healthy eating venues will be developed alongside active transport links, integrated cycle paths and walking routes. Access to smart technology will also make healthy choices easy.

Park's rollercoaster ride goes on as chairman quits

THE chairman of Margate's Dreamland park has quit.

Nick Laister says he is to step down from the Dreamland Trust, the charity responsible for saving Margate's famous amusement park from re-development.

Mr Laister, who co-founded the organisation and was its first chair, said: "The trust is now entering a new phase. This seemed to me to

be an appropriate point for me to step down to allow a new chair to drive the organisation forward.

It comes just months after the firm brought in to operate the park, Sands Heritage, revealed it was close to £3million in debt, forcing it to renegotiate payments to creditors.

The Dreamland Trust is now actively seeking a new chair – a non-executive voluntary role.

Taste of Kent Awards reveal winners at glitzy ceremony

LOCAL food champions Produced in Kent were named the winners of this year's Taste of Kent Awards following a black tie ceremony at the Kent Showground in Detling on Thursday.

And the winner of the big prize – restaurant of the year – was popular Folkestone cafe Coogies, beating off stiff competition from Margate's Ambrette and The Corner House in Minster.

Winner of the best dining pub was The George Inn in Molash. Stephanie Durling of Produced in Kent, said: "We would like to congratulate the winners and all the entrants. This year's awards have attracted thousands of voters from across the county and beyond and it is fair to say that the results were extremely close."

Full results: www.kentnews.co.uk



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After Oscar glory, Rylance now bids for Oliviers

FRESH from winning an Academy Award in Los Angeles last weekend, Ashford-born actor Mark Rylance faces Sherlock star Benedict Cumberbatch in a scrap to win one of the theatre's top awards.

Just hours after picking up his Oscar he was nominated in for an Olivier Award in the prestigious best actor category.

Mr Rylance is recognised for his role in *Farinelli And The King*. He's up against a star-studded list of nominees including Mr Cumberbatch's *Hamlet*, Sir Kenneth Branagh for *The Winter's Tale*, Kenneth Cranham for *The Father* and Adrian Lester for *Red Velvet*.

Find out more about Mr Rylance's Oscar success inside - turn inside.



APPOINTMENT: Dr Phil Hesketh

Bishop delight as acting dean given the job

THE Reverend Canon Dr Philip John Hesketh has been named the new dean of Rochester Cathedral.

He replaces Dr Mark Beach who resigned from the post in January 2015, after separating from his wife.

Dr Hesketh has taken over the position permanently having assumed the role on an interim basis since Dr Beach's departure.

Dr Hesketh said: "I feel it is an enormous privilege to have been asked to be dean at this time. The cathedral faces enormous challenges and I am confident that together under God we can meet them."

"I have been truly humbled by the warmth of support I have received during my time as acting dean, and by the confidence and trust that others have placed in me. It is important to remember that no one is an island, and it is only together that we can be what God wants us to be."

Bishop of Rochester, the Right Reverend James Langstaff added: "Phil is already well-known to the cathedral and wider community, not least through his recent time as acting dean. I assure him of my prayers as he prepares to move into the substantive post, and I look forward to working closely with him in the years to come."

Ambulance service on the defence as report on call handling is leaked

By Luke May

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THE future of South East Coast Ambulance Service (Secamb) chairman Tony Thorne is up in the air following reports he had been told to leave his post.

It follows a leak earlier this week to the Daily Telegraph of a draft version of a report being compiled by health regulator Monitor. The paper claimed it was calling for Mr Thorne's head amid claims the trust switched some calls from the non-emergency 111 to the 999 system; a move designed to buy themselves more time to respond to calls and thus hit targets.

But the pilot project proved hugely controversial amid claims it could be putting patients' lives at risk.

Secamb handles emergency calls across Kent, East Sussex and much of the south east stretching through to Oxford and Hampshire.

However, Monitor denied it had told him to go and that its official re-



PRESSURE: Report due soon

port into the situation had yet to be published.

A Secamb spokesperson said: "We refute the claims. The article refers to a report undertaken by Deloitte which was not looking at patient im-

pact but at the decision-making and governance around the implementation of the pilot, and what recommendations can be made for Secamb's governance processes in light of this.

"As we have stated previously, the separate, independent, clinically-led patient impact review, being carried out as part of the Monitor undertakings, is currently under way and is yet to be concluded. Until it does it is inaccurate and completely misleading to attribute or imply any harm or deaths to the pilot.

"We will publish the findings of the patient impact review as soon as it is complete."

The trust refused to comment on the position of Mr Thorne.

Independent patient champions Healthwatch Kent, said: "We have not seen a copy of the leaked report, however, we are working with both the ambulance trust and the regulator Monitor. In the meantime, we would like to reassure people that we have no current concerns about the 999 or 111 service."

OAP wins £30,000 after a 60p gamble

A RETIRED electrician from Northfleet is celebrating after scooping over £30,000 from a 60p bet.

Tony Savill, 70, hit the jackpot as his horses came home in the right places as part of a toteplacepot sweepstake.

A toteplacepot is where a punter has to get their chosen horse to finish first, second or third in each of the first six races at a specific meeting.

Quoted in the Daily Mirror this week, he said he spends about £50 a week betting on greyhounds, horses and football during the season.

The Tottenham Hotspur fan admitted he checks a horse's form, jockey and trainers before making his decision, usually at the Betfred shop in Gravesend.

Mr Savill said he and his wife, Shirley, plan to join friends on cruises after going on a holiday to Scotland that they booked prior to his big win.

He claimed the closest he has ever come to such a victory was a £4,000 jackpot in the late 1970s.

Long jail term after stabbing father dead

A MAN who killed his father at his home in Tonbridge last year following a trivial row over a phone charger has been jailed for 18 years.

Police had been called to the property in Hectorage Road on May 19, 2015 at 7.15pm to reports that two men had suffered serious knife injuries.

Patrick Murphy, 30, had repeatedly stabbed his father, Joe, in the chest and arms and the 54-year-old died at the scene. He also attacked his brother, who later recovered in hospital.

Murphy was charged with the murder of his father, but following a trial at Maidstone Crown Court was found guilty of manslaughter by a jury.

He was also convicted of wounding with intent, in relation to the attack on his brother.

On Wednesday, he was sentenced to 18 years in prison for manslaughter and nine years for wounding with intent, which will be served concurrently.

Detective chief inspector Tony Pledger said: "There can never be any excuse for the level of violence that was used by Murphy."

Union ballot Eurostar staff over strike action

A RAIL union has started to ballot Eurostar staff over strike action.

It comes following a dispute over lone working, and what the Rail, Maritime and Transport union (RMT) describes as 'victimisation' of one individual member of staff, who was charged with gross misconduct.

Eurostar, which has offices in Ashford and runs the high-speed international services that calls at Ebbsfleet and Ashford International stations, charged the train manager in question for objecting to instructions to work a section of a route alone.

The ballot, for both strike action and action short of a strike, opened on Tuesday and closes on March 15. RMT general secretary Mick Cash said: "This is a situation that the union will not allow to go unchallenged. Our members recognise full well that it could be them next and that it is imperative that they stand together."

A spokesperson for Eurostar refused to comment on individual cases but insisted the company was in on-going discussions to find a solution.

MPs write to energy secretary to switch off giant pylon path

By Tom Pyman

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THREE east Kent MPs have intensified their opposition to plans for a string of huge new pylons across the countryside by writing to the energy secretary, Amber Rudd.

North Thanet's Sir Roger Gale, Thanet South's Craig Mackinlay and Canterbury's Julian Brazier, all Conservative, are all standing up to plans by National Grid for the Richborough Project.

The planned pylon route will carry power from Richborough, near Sandwich - which will be receiving electricity pumped in from Belgium via the Nemo Link - to an electricity sub station in Canterbury. Plans are currently before the planning inspectorate.

South East Water has already expressed its disappointment that the route will run across a site earmarked for a major new reservoir at Broad Oak in Canterbury.

In a joint statement, the MPs said: "We have all opposed this project since it was announced several years ago, and it is important that the secretary of state for energy knows that our constituents do not want this monstrosity looming over our countryside.

"What makes it worse is that other viable alternatives exist.

"We would urge anyone who agrees with



ROUTE: Pylons will cut across much of east Kent if plans get the go-ahead

us to also register their opposition to the planning inspectorate here."

The deadline for representations is April 1.

The letter to Amber Rudd reads: "We collectively recognise the need to 'keep the lights on' but this scheme is neither desirable nor necessary. This line of proposed pylons would, if allowed to be erected, scar some of east Kent's most beautiful landscapes with massive and intrusive structures.

"The tallest pylons planned are as tall as the subsidiary towers of Canterbury Cathedral.

"If it is necessary to import power from Germany at considerable loss en route then there is a perfectly viable undersea route from Zeebrugge to Kingsnorth that could connect to the British National Grid with no need for unsightly infrastructure whatsoever.

"We believe that scant attention has been paid to this option which might be slightly more costly in the short term but would, in the longer term, be highly cost-effective."

Corelli author latest to be 'In Conversation'

BEST-selling British novelist, Louis de Bernieres will visit the University of Kent next week, as the latest guest in its In Conversation series.

The event will take place at 6.45pm on March 8 in the Woolf Lecture Theatre on the University's Canterbury campus, and is free to attend and open to all. It will be hosted by the university's chancellor, Gavin Esler.

Each event concludes with a Q&A session.

A night with Widdy in aid of Heart of Kent

FORMER MP, minister and Strictly Come Dancing star Ann Widdecombe will be hosting a special evening in aid of the Heart of Kent Hospice on June 11.

An Audience with Ann Widdecombe will include stories, anecdotes and opinions and takes place at the Hop Farm in Paddock Wood from 7pm. Tickets are £25.

Teenager hurt in crash

POLICE are appealing for witnesses following a smash in Sevenoaks which left a teenage pedestrian in a serious condition in hospital.

The 17-year-old was walking along Dartford Road at around 7.20pm on Wednesday when he was hit by a grey Vauxhall Corsa.

If you can help call 01622 798538, or email sciutd@kent.pnn.police.uk.

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Family pay tribute to 'happy and caring' victim of crash

TRIBUTES were paid this week to a 46-year-old man killed in a five-vehicle smash on the A2 on Tuesday morning.

Mark Sharp, an HGV driver from Gravesend, died following a collision on the A2 coastbound carriageway, between Leyton Cross and junction 2 of the M25, at 5.10am. He was in a Nissan Micra at the time of the crash.

In a statement his family said: "Mark was sadly taken from his family in the most tragic circumstances imaginable."

"Mark, a 46-year-old HGV driver, was born in Dulwich and lived in Gravesend with his beloved wife.

"The son, brother, husband, and uncle will be remembered fondly as a gentleman with a happy, caring and generous manner to his loving



family and friends.

"The keen cook, gardener and classic car enthusiast will be sorely missed."

The initial crash is believed to have involved the Micra and a taxi

before three further vehicles collided. The taxi driver had left the scene by the time police arrived. Officers believe he may hold key information about the circumstances leading up to the crash.

Fresh call to head to GP rather than hospital A&E

HEALTH chiefs have once again urged patients to think long and hard before heading to accident and emergency departments at our hospitals as they continue to struggle under the weight of demand.

It comes after Dartford's Darent Valley Hospital saw a significant rise in the number of patients at its A&E. That prompted a plea to use GP services or walk-in clinics instead if not a genuine medical emergency.

Will Fleetney, emergency department matron at Darent Valley, said: "We are now seeing more than 300 patients a day. In January we saw 800 more patients than during the same period last year and nearly 200 more ambulances attended."

"It is important that people understand what services to

use when they need medical attention.

"Nearly a third of the people we see could potentially be seen by their GP or at a walk-in centre or minor injury unit."

As pressure mounts on emergency departments, the local clinical commissioning group is assuring people they may get seen quicker if they use one of the other services available.

Dr Liz Lunt of Dartford, Gravesend and Swanley CCG said: "The GPs and nurses at walk-in centres and minor injury units can see you without an appointment. So, if you have a minor injury or illness, you may get seen quicker than at A&E, as life-threatening and serious emergencies are always prioritised at emergency departments."

Landlord presentations

LANDLORDS in west Kent are invited to attend a free event on Monday, March 14, to share good practice.

The West Kent Landlord Forum will take place at the Town Hall beginning at 5pm with presentations on a host of key topics starting from 5.45pm.

P&O Choir joins line up

THE P&O Ferries Choir, winners of TV show The Choir: Sing While You Work, will be back to perform at the Leeds Castle Classical Concert on July 9.

The hugely popular summer event has tickets available now. See the website www.leeds castleconcert.co.uk for more.

Competition winner

ALISON Griffiths from Lyminge will be attending the Leeds Castle Classical Concert after being drawn out of a hat from readers' pictures sent in to our Images of Kent page.

Find out how you can take part in the March draw by turning to our letters' page.

Teacher recruitment

MEDWAY holds its largest teacher recruitment fair later this month in a bid to get more outstanding teachers into local schools.

More than 75 schools, recruitment agencies, teacher training providers and teacher support agencies will be at the Corn Exchange in Rochester on March 23.



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"Mum has first class care and is very happy, I cannot recommend Amherst Court enough"

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Top Three Stories



1. Southeastern struggles

Dartford MP slams train company

2. Longbeech needs £1.3m

Woodland's ground flora is suffering

3. Westerham cafe open

Costa has been shut since Xmas Eve smash

The Essential Guide:



...to Dreamland

Everything you need to know about Margate's amusement park



FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: A training exercise from emergency response times across the capital was held at the former site of Littlebrook Power Station in Dartford this week. See page 32 for the full story.

Missed last week's...?

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Top Three Blogs



1. Drunk and disorderly

Why alcohol is no excuse for violence

2. Downton Abbey? Awful

We review the popular ITV drama

3. Time for a 6-hour day?

It works in Sweden, could it do so here?

Results of the KoS Online Poll

Should Kent have more unitary authorities?

- 1 Yes, I want them now - 78%
- 2 Perhaps in the future - 13%
- 3 No, I'm happy with two-tier - 9%
- 4 Who cares? - 0%

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PRICE: The Department of Health says its current vaccination programme is suitable and that it cannot stretch to inoculating every child under the age of 11

MenB vaccine blow due to costs

Kent GP 'not surprised' at decision by the Department of Health that it cannot afford to roll out a full vaccination programme against meningitis B - despite tragic death of Maidstone toddler Faye Burdett

THE Department of Health's decision earlier this week to reject giving the meningitis B vaccine to all children on cost grounds has been slammed by a charity, *writes Tom Pyman.*

A petition demanding a change in policy received over 800,000 signatures last month following the death of two-year-old Maidstone toddler, Faye Burdett, on Valentine's Day.

The story attracted nationwide interest after her mother Jenny shared shocking 'before and after' pictures of her daughter - one taken just before her death - on social media, saying the family had endured "a pain you cannot describe".

Currently, only newborn children are eligible for the vaccine. The petition called for that to be rolled out to all children under the age of 11.

But the government has said that "the NHS budget is a finite resource", meaning it has to follow recommendations by the joint committee on vaccination and immunisation (JCVI) to prevent further pressure being piled on the health service.

However, the Meningitis Research Foundation said it was disappointed by the government's decision, with a

spokesperson saying: "Although we understand that the NHS budget is finite, we argue that the current cost-effectiveness rules undervalue the prevention of severe illness in childhood.

"There is evidence that the public prefer prevention over cure, and would rather prevent death or severe disability in a few than mild illness among many people.

"But the rules do not reflect these preferences. Meningitis is every parent's nightmare. And the government's cost-effectiveness calculations simply do not take this level of public concern into account.

"They must, or the meningitis B vaccine and future childhood vaccines for less common, severe illnesses will always face an uphill struggle."

The charity said it had repeatedly called for a study to show whether immunising teenagers could protect all age groups but the government still had not agreed to this despite the JCVI recommending it in 2014.

Vinny Smith, chief executive of the charity, said: "In the past two weeks there has been an unprecedented surge in public awareness about vaccinations against meningitis and private vaccine stocks have run out.

"The demand for this vaccine is clear. This is an exceptional disease, with exceptional fear associated with it. For every parent who worries this could touch their family, 400 cases of meningitis each year is simply 400 too many."

But Strood GP Dr Julian Spinks said the decision was not a surprise. He told KoS: "The meningitis B vaccine cost a lot to develop so is quite expensive. We only have the current scheme because the government managed to make a deal to lower the price.

"I understand people saying that you can't put a value on our children's lives, but if you're going to spend money you've got to first put it in context with where else that money could be spent; you could be choosing between two different lives. It's a very difficult decision that has to be made."

Parents and friends of Faye, for whom a memorial service was held this week, declined to comment on the decision when contacted by KoS.

The debate extended to the House of Commons on Wednesday, where Helen Whately, MP for Faversham and Mid Kent, asked the prime minister if "the government will look at

what more could be done to prevent more children like Faye dying from this horrible disease?"

Responding, David Cameron said: "On behalf of the whole house let me extend my sympathies and condolences to Faye's parents and all those who had children suffering from this terrible disease.

"The programme was based on the advice of the JCVI who recommended targeting the vaccine to protect infants at highest risk; the incident of highest risk occurs at five months and of the 276 children contracting meningitis B (MenB) last year, over 100 were under one year of age.

"But [Ms Whately] makes important points and we need to look at all the evidence carefully, as do the expert bodies that advise us, recognising that Britain has already taken some very important steps forward in being the first country to vaccinate in this way."

An official, formal debate is still scheduled to take place in the Commons, as a consideration for any discussion needs to be had when a public petition receives over 100,000 signatures.

In response to the petition, the Department of Health said: "The MenB

vaccine is offered to infants, free on the NHS, at two months with further doses at four and 12 months. The programme, as advised by independent experts, offers protection to those at highest risk.

"As the UK, we are proud to have been the first - and to date the only - country in the world to introduce a national, publicly-funded MenB immunisation programme for infants using the Bexsero vaccine. We are leading the world in offering children protection from this devastating disease.

"The NHS budget is a finite resource. It is therefore essential that JCVI's recommendations are underpinned by evidence of cost-effectiveness.

"Offering the vaccine outside of JCVI's advice would not be cost effective, and would not therefore represent a good use of NHS resources."

Maidstone MP Helen Grant added: "I believe the manufacturer should be taking a more reasonable view on their pricing policy to allow our publicly funded scheme to be expanded. I will be asking questions of the DoH regarding their negotiating stance on this point."



ROW: David Cameron and Francois Hollande in Amiens this week. Talks between the two were dominated, at first, by claims by a French minister the Jungle could hop across the Channel to Kent

French minister claims migrant camps could be heading our way

Fresh political row erupts after senior government official in Paris says border controls in Calais may be switched to Dover if we pull out of the EU, while French president warns of 'consequences' of Brexit

A VOTE for Brexit could result in migrant camps being moved from Calais to Kent, a French government minister has suggested.

Finance minister Emmanuel Macron indicated that British withdrawal from the EU could lead to Paris ending a 2003 treaty which allows UK border guards to be stationed in Calais, where thousands of migrants live in makeshift encampments awaiting their opportunity to cross the Channel.

Speaking ahead of talks between David Cameron and president Francois Hollande in the French city of Amiens, Mr Macron also suggested France would "roll out the red carpet" for bankers wanting to "repatriate" from the City of London to Paris if Britain quit the EU.

He cautioned that any country leaving the 28-nation bloc could not expect to retain the same terms of trade with its former partners.

The prime minister is likely to see Mr Macron's comments as confirmation of his own warning that France could stop allowing UK border checks on its side of the Channel if Britain votes to leave the EU.

Downing Street confirmed the two men are expected to discuss the situation in Calais at the Anglo-French summit, where security is top of the agenda.

Mr Cameron said he was "convinced" EU membership enhances Britain's security, as he prepared to unveil plans to co-operate with France on the development of a new advanced drone.

Mr Macron indicated that UK departure from the EU would scupper the Le Touquet treaty which has seen UK border officials carrying out checks on the French side of the Channel.

"The day this relationship unravels, migrants will no longer be in Calais," he said.

Meanwhile, the "financial passport" system which allows UK financial services companies to operate in the rest of Europe would "work less well", he said.

In an echo of Mr Cameron's 2012 offer to "roll out the red carpet" to businessmen fleeing high-tax France, Mr Macron told the FT: "If I were to reason like those who roll out red carpets, I would say we might have some repatriations from the City of London."

During the two-year process of negotiating a new relationship with a departing member, the EU's "collective energy would be spent on unwinding existing links, not recreating new ones", he said.

Mr Macron's comments were dismissed as "scaremongering" by London mayor and leading advocate of Brexit Boris Johnson.

Breaking into Franglais during a visit to south London, Mr Johnson said: "I would say 'Donnez-moi un break'. There's absolutely no reason why that treaty should be changed."

"It was an inter-governmental treaty, it was the Le Touquet treaty. It was signed between the British government and the French government. It's not in the French interests to want to do that and it's just the usual flapping and scaremongering."

Meanwhile, cabinet minister Chris Grayling, who is also campaigning for Leave, pointed to recent comments by French interior minister Bernard Cazeneuve, who said that dropping the border co-operation with Britain would be "foolhardy".

He spoke after Conservative MP and Grassroots Out co-founder Peter Bone said France should be ashamed that it cannot rehouse the 4,000 migrants in The Jungle.

During a debate in Westminster on Thursday, Mr Bone said: "Some French minister has apparently been saying that if we have the nerve to come out of the EU, all the 4,000 people in Calais will be put in rubber boats and come across to Britain, because the French don't want anything to do with it."

"So if I was a Frenchman, I would

be hugely embarrassed by my government - a country that's two-and-a-half times the size of this country and it's roughly the same population - cannot disperse 4,000 people and look after them. They should be ashamed."

"But could we have a statement from the foreign secretary next week letting this house know whether it is the government's position that if we came out of the EU we would have more immigration to this country rather than less?"

Mr Grayling replied: "I'm absolutely certain that the foreign secretary will be back before this house again shortly and the opportunity will be there to put that point."

"Of course I have heard in the last couple of weeks the French interior minister reassure us that the bilateral

agreements that exist between the United Kingdom and France over border controls is one that the French government would not wish to put at risk."

But French president Francois Hollande warned of "consequences" if the UK voted to leave. He said: "I don't want to scare you. I just want to say the truth."

"There will be consequences if the UK is to leave the EU, there will be consequences in many areas, in the single market, in the financial trade, in development, in the economic development between our two countries."

"And especially in the way we handle the situation in terms of immigration."

• For more on Europe and the EU referendum see page 19.

JUNGLE DEMOLITION CONTINUES IN CALAIS

MIRGRANTS facing eviction from the camp in Calais known as the Jungle sewed their lips together to protest at their treatment by France.

At least five men staged the protest and held aloft banners as bulldozers cleared ramshackle homes in the slum.

French CRS riot officers armed with tear gas, batons and riot shields stood by as the protest was held peacefully.

Elsewhere, a shack went up in flames as clearance continued at the camp, which is home to around 4,000 migrants and refugees, many of

whom are intent on reaching Britain.

Migrants and refugees who have fled war, poverty and persecution looked on as bulldozers dismantled the shacks they had lived in.

One migrant, a 22-year-old man from Darfur, Sudan, who declined to be named, said the French authorities have treated them like "animals". He said: "One of the reasons to go to England is because you can see what life is like for us in France. We have been in this camp living like this for six months."

"We have been treated like animals. We know that we are not

above the law but what they are doing is very aggressive."

Local government official Vincent Berton said France was focused on finding a better solution for the migrants and refugees, particularly the children.

He said the operation to clear the Jungle's southern section would last three weeks. And the overall aim was to halve the population size of the sprawling site to around 2,000. Migrants will be moved to heated containers nearby or to centres around France where they can apply for asylum.



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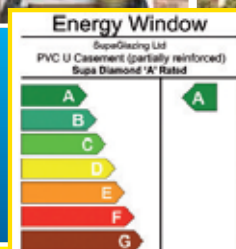
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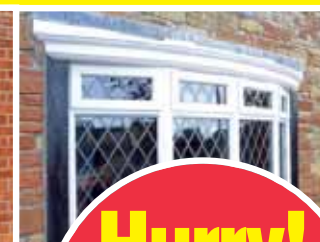
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Is it time for a radical shake-up of our local government?

Money is tighter than ever and it's not going to get any easier. So should we persevere with a two-tier system of local councils where services and roles are duplicated? Or should we consider a move to a unitary system? A KoS special report

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

AS OUR councils lurch towards having to become financially self-sufficient with funding from Whitehall slashed dramatically, there appears to be a growing warmth towards introducing one of the most dramatic changes in our local government the county has ever seen.

And that could radically alter how our local services are provided and how much cash there is to go round. It could also sound the death knell for Kent County Council - first formed in 1889.

So just what would it mean, and why would it impact on you?

Currently, the county is ruled by a two-tier system. Kent County Council sits at the top, above a layer of a dozen district and borough councils.

At the moment, KCC looks after services including schools, social care, public health, community safety and transport.

District and borough councils are responsible for services such as planning applications, rubbish collection and housing.

What is now being whispered amid the corridors of power - and which could yet come about due to Westminster's shift towards devolving powers to the regions - is whether now is the time to once again debate the issue of unitary authorities.

Supporters of the idea believe it to be a more accountable, connected and localised system of governance, arguing that the current setup is too complex, and that it leaves residents confused as to who exactly is responsible for what services.

A move towards introducing unitary authorities, like the one in Medway, would mean all services come under one single umbrella of responsibility.

Kent would be effectively carved up into separate unitaries of roughly equal sizes - clumping together two or three existing east Kent councils, for example, into one all-powerful body.

But this mass streamlining of services would mean a savage cull of councillor and administrative jobs, therefore would take a brave authority, at local or county level, to vote it through.

Indeed, KCC leader, Paul Carter told KoS this week he is committed to making the cur-

rent two-tier system work, although did hint that one, county-wide unitary council such as the one seen in Wiltshire, could bear fruit if such a situation was forced on them by central government.

The fact he is even pondering the plan could, say observers, speak volumes as to anxiety levels in County Hall about just what could lurk around the corner in an era of such dramatic and swift changes to local authorities.

But the gradual removal of the revenue support grant as part of George Osborne's austerity push means local government is under more financial pressure than ever before, and cuts to frontline services have been significant over recent years.

In their recent budgets, both KCC and Medway approved a council tax increase of almost four per cent in an attempt to help balance the books. But services are still being savaged.

Critics of the current two-tier system claim transitioning to a unitary setup would be more cost-effective, with the financial benefits potentially passed onto local people in the form of council tax being reduced.

Sir Roger Gale, MP for North Thanet, said the idea was gaining traction in the east of the county, with fellow Conservative members, Julian Brazier (Canterbury), Craig Mackinlay (South Thanet) and Charlie Elphicke (Dover) also in support.

He told KoS: "I'm absolutely, totally in favour of the idea. I think KCC has lost the plot and I think we would be better off with an east Kent unitary of Shepway, Canterbury, Thanet and Dover, with Swale perhaps being cut in half."

"East Kent Housing [where councils have combined their housing departments into one] shows that this kind of movement is already happening, and the next logical step is to go one further and form a unitary body."

"For far too long KCC has been west Kent-centric, and with reduced numbers I think it would work because we've got good leaders here."

"KCC wouldn't have a say - Paul Carter thinks he does but in this instance he is irrelevant."

"If we can make savings through consolidating administration, we would then have a chance to spend that money on improving services, or reducing council tax - hopefully both."

Cllr Carter is quick to point out he doesn't claim any responsibility for such a decision, and that it is "above my pay grade".

HQ: County Hall is the traditional seat of power for Kent County Council



Complaints of a west-east divide in Kent are nothing new, with those in Margate feeling the distance between themselves and County Hall in Maidstone is a lot more than 42 miles up the A299.

Iris Johnston, former leader and head of the Labour group at Thanet District Council, said: "The Labour Party has mixed views but I think generally they tend to see unitaries as the way forward.

"We've long felt as if we're isolated in east Kent and while things are improving, this is something I would certainly support and I can see it happening in the future."

Simon Cook, Conservative leader of Canter-

bury City Council, has long backed the concept, but admits care needs to be taken before any changes are made.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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He said: "If you were inventing local government tomorrow you would absolutely go for it, because it's the most sensible way of delivering services."

"But government policy - particularly in terms of devolution - is changing so fast and that makes it a challenge."

"Everyone is talking about it but it would need to be done carefully because the worst thing would be to rush into something and see it go horribly wrong."

Speaking on behalf of the Green Party, former Thanet councillor Ian Driver insisted supporting a shift to unitary authorities would feature heavily in the party's election campaign at local level, leading up to the local elections next year.

The Greens say they would like to see six authorities providing services to populations of between 200,000 and 300,000 people, suggesting unitaries covering Thanet and Dover; Canterbury and Swale; Shepway and Ashford; Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling; Dartford and Gravesham; and Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells.

Mr Driver said: "We feel that KCC is too large and it needs breaking down into small parts because we all just get dragged along with the Maidstone agenda."

The interest is not simply limited to those in the east of the county, however.

While keeping cards close to their chests in terms of details, councils in Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling hinted that the idea had been floated and discussions held in creating a more joined-up local government system.

David Jukes, leader of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, said: "We are looking at the possibility of combined authorities but at this stage we will not be considering unitary authorities."

Meanwhile a spokesperson for Tonbridge and Malling added: "We are in early discussions with both the county council and other districts to identify ways of streamlining services."

While the concept takes baby steps in the west, and gathers train-like momentum in the east, there appears to be no movement whatsoever in the north of the county.

Neither Dartford nor Gravesham councils have engaged in discussions about merging into a unitary authority and don't appear to intend to any time soon in the future.

While insisting that the current model is proving effective for the people of Kent, Cllr Carter admitted a unitary was to be introduced, he'd want it to be county-wide, like the one seen in Wiltshire.

The authority there rolled the former county council and four district councils into one unitary body in 2009, and is now regarded as one of



THE MEDWAY EXAMPLE

Those that are interested will look extensively at the journey Medway has taken to become a single body.

The authority reorganised in 1974 to see Strood Rural District Council, the City of Rochester and the borough of Chatham join together to form Medway District Council.

In 1998, Gillingham Borough Council joined to create today's unitary Medway council, which councillors clearly feel has been a success and a source of pride.

Former Conservative council leader Rodney Chambers, who is now the authority's portfolio holder for inward investment, strategic regeneration and partnerships, was involved in the decision making process just before the turn of the century and claims the authority has no regrets nearly 20 years on.

He said: "There was a debate in the late 1980s and plans to divide the county up into three or five authorities, with Medway being one of those."

"That died a little in the early

1990s but then when the area suffered a loss of employment we began to resurrect the proposals."

"Ultimately, Medway came about because the local authorities realised that we weren't able to regenerate the area without being in control of our own destiny."

"The government listened to us and we have ended up with what is now recognised by most people as a great success."

"We have restored Medway's standing as a place to live and do business and proved that we were able to bring back opportunities and set an example of delivering regeneration from a local level."

"Our strength was that we were an identifiable, cohesive area."

"It could possibly work with coastal communities like Thanet and Dover which are suffering, but I'm not so sure about rural areas of the county."

"Having said that, it's something I recommend they seriously

consider if they want to make an impact on providing better facilities and opportunities."

Alan Jarrett, the current Conservative leader of Medway Council, said: "This system brings a number of benefits for our residents, the biggest of which is knowing exactly who is accountable."

"We run all services across Medway, there is absolute clarity and it has worked very well since 1998."

"I couldn't say whether it would work across Kent, that's up to them to decide."

Opposition Labour leader Vince Maple added: "One of the interesting things for me is that there's an identity that comes with living in Medway now."

"I'm a big supporter of the concept, but it's got to be right for that community."

"The fact that it might be cheaper shouldn't be the driver - you want local government to be as efficient as possible."

the most efficient authorities in the UK.

Cllr Carter, pictured left, told KoS: "We're working very hard to try and make two-tier work."

"But if people are going to open the debate, the answer for me is that you need large unitary authorities to provide all services effectively."

"The strength and size of the county council allows us to lobby central government hard and I think that power would be lost if Kent was bro-

ken up into several unitaries," he said.

"People are very proud to live in Kent and we're far better off standing united and working together as one."

"I'm happy with the status quo, but if central government were to force this upon us, one single authority, following the Wiltshire model, would be the way to go."

The Local Government Association says that setting up what it calls a 'combined authority' tends to take

between 12 and 18 months to complete.

The process would include a governance review by every council involved and a government consultation on whether the authority will fulfil certain obligations, before parliament approves the application.

■ **What do you think? Is it worth pursuing? Share your views and join the debate, email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.**

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European gang remain divided over union future

For those elected to Brussels, the pros and cons of the EU should surely be more obvious? But when we asked for their views, it appears not to be the case

By Luke May

luke.may@archant.co.uk

IT WOULD have come as little surprise to many when we revealed last week that the country's members of Parliament are broadly split as to whether we should opt to remain or leave the EU in June's referendum.

After all, the debate has divided opinion across the political spectrum for years.

But you would, perhaps, think that those who spend much of their time striding not the corridors of power in this country, but deep within the heart of the Brussels bureaucratic machine, would be broadly more supportive.

Yet, when you consider three of our MEPs are Ukip - and another, Janice Atkinson, was elected Ukip before being booted out of the party - you can immediately see that opinion sits as divided as that in Westminster.

There are 10 MEPs in total who serve the south east - an area which encompasses all of Kent and stretches up through East and West Sussex, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight and Surrey, Oxfordshire and Berkshire.

The last Euro elections were in May 2014, with Ukip claiming the lion's share of MEPs.

And it is only Conservative Nirj Deva who is yet to announce his stance on whether to stay in the European Union, or to join the Brexit campaign.

So from the remaining nine MEPs representing our region, just where does everyone stand?

All three Ukip MEPs are opposed - and among their number is the national party leader, Westerham's Nigel Farage, whose views on Europe are well known.

Ukip MEP Diane James outlined her concerns over staying in.

She told KoS: "What was initially proclaimed as a trade-enhancing association deal in the 1970s with some political linkage, EU membership has

become a political anchor with a mere trade glossing element to disguise from UK citizens that political and government control now resides in Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg rather than London, Edinburgh, Cardiff or Belfast.

"Be it energy strategy, environmental protection, workers' rights, taxation policy and many others - the UK government can and should make decisions on these vital areas without EU interference, control or diktat."

But as the Conservative party finds itself at the centre of a split over the referendum, with prime minister David Cameron leading the campaign to stay in, and mayor of London Boris Johnson a vocal supporter of the Brexit campaign, the party's divide has leaked in to its EU representatives.

Former leader of the Conservatives in Europe, Folkestone's Richard Ashworth, however, supports the PM's stance and believes the UK is better off in.

He said: "The Cameron package has put the UK in a unique place; and it is a good deal for Britain. We have full membership of, and equal access, to the largest and wealthiest single market in the world - bigger even than the USA."

"We do not have to join the euro and our taxpayers will not have to pay for Eurozone bailouts. We are not members of the Schengen zone; that means we are under no obligation to accept refugees, migrants or third country nationals unless we choose to do so."

"We have legal recognition that the UK is an independent sovereign coun-

try in charge of its own destiny; our parliament has a stronger role and we are not committed to ever closer union."

"Far too often this debate is about emotions and not facts. The 'out' campaign has not offered any credible alternative, and it is not simply enough to say leave's sake. Why step out of the world's largest, wealthiest single market, putting industry, jobs and growth at risk for a leap into the dark?"

But fellow Conservative and dedicated Eurosceptic Daniel Hannan claims the UK can have its cake and eat it too, by leaving the EU but still playing an active part in the European market.

He said: "Our annual tribute to Brussels now stands at £19bn a year. If we kept that money at home, we

could give the entire country a two thirds cut in council tax."

"It's true that some of the £19bn is spent in Britain. Around half of what we hand over dribbles back to us."

"As long as we're in the EU, we can't sign independent trade deals with booming countries like India, Pakistan, Australia and New Zealand which are among our oldest friends."

"Back in 1973, when we joined, Europe looked like the future. Since then, the EU has shrunk from 36 per cent of the world economy to 17 per cent."

"No one is suggesting that we give up on our trade with Europe; only that we also lift our eyes to more distant horizons."

"You don't have to be in the EU to be part of the common market."

"The European free trade area stretches right across the continent, from non-EU Iceland to non-EU Turkey. No one is suggesting that we will leave that common market when we leave the EU."

But as campaigners on either side discuss the economic factor of leaving, the Liberal Democrat's sole representative in Europe, Catherine Bearder, highlighted the work done between Kent Police and enforcement partners overseas, citing the work as a reason to stay in.

She said: "Kent benefits hugely from our EU membership. This region is the gateway for trade with Europe, driving investment and jobs."

"We've also seen millions of pounds of EU funding spent to boost the local economy, including major redevelopments of Folkestone and Chatham town centres and schemes to promote tourism."

"Thanks to the EU, Kent Police is able to work closely with its European partners to keep us safe, bringing a number of serious criminals to justice."

Which leaves us with five wanting out, four hoping to stay in and one still pondering their options.

Now whoever thought the European debate was going to be clear cut?



SPLIT: Richard Ashworth (Con), Catherine Bearder (Lib), Daniel Hannan (Con) and Diane James (Ukip) all have very clear views on whether we should vote to stay in or opt out of the European Union.

IN OR OUT? SOUTH EAST MEPS' CURRENT POSITIONS:

IN

- Richard Ashworth (Con)
- Anneliese Dodds (Lab)
- Keith Taylor (Green)
- Catherine Bearder (Lib Dem)

OUT

- Nigel Farage (Ukip)
- Raymond Pinch (Ukip)
- Diane James (Ukip)
- Janice Atkinson (Ind)
- Daniel Hannan (Con)

UNDECLARED

- Nirj Deva (Conservative)





It's not perfect, but EU fuels our growth

Laura Sandys is the former Conservative South Thanet MP who stood down at last year's general election. Today, she is chair of the European Movement - part of the campaign for Britain to remain in the EU. Following on from last week's article by Sittingbourne MP Gordon Henderson's on why he want to leave, Ms Sandys makes her case to remain to KoS.

IT WAS lovely to be back in Sandwich a few weeks ago at an event putting forward the case to stay in the EU.

A very well attended debate at Discovery Park with outers and inners, it was fascinating to hear the public's concerns about both sides of the argument.

Kent is a particularly interested party in relation to the EU in or out debate. We are at the front line of relationships with Europe.

While some of these will not be impacted by any exit, many of them

will. The bigger companies will always find a way to make trade work, but it is the smaller companies and sole traders that do a lot of trade with Europe who will be hit by any small changes to our relationship.

Currently we benefit from thousands of EU students coming to our English language schools in Folkestone, Thanet and Canterbury with no restrictions – and bolstering the local economy throughout the year.

It is great that Ramsgate fishermen can sell 90 per cent of their fish in Boulogne fish market – I can't see the

French fishermen wanting our competition if we come out of the EU.

And with visa control, which is what we will need if we come out of the single market, how will that impact our tourist businesses who depend on European visitors all year round?

We take for granted that people and goods can move between the UK and at the meeting in Sandwich it was good to hear from a local haulage company who was saying how disastrous it would be for Kent's transport businesses if we left the EU putting



additional barriers to free movement.

This would obviously impact Euro-tunnel and our ferry companies too.

I have never apologised for our membership of the largest trading bloc in the world, neither am I apologetic for having a strong voice in shaping the rules of our neighbour-

hood. While all bureaucracies need a kicking on a regular basis that is no reason to leave.

While Europe has certainly done some irritating things, on the big substantive issues the UK has done well out of our membership.

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the environment – the birds, the bees, and Kent's blue flag beaches and clean air.

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At the same time we do have control over our borders as we still need a passport to travel to Europe. And we also have total sovereignty as it was the British Parliament who passed the European Communities Act and it can be repealed any time – with or without a referendum. We are sover-

eign - no one took us into the EU against the will of parliament.

There is of course the vision for an exit – but the audience at the debate in east Kent was rather amused when hearing the two proponents of a Brexit at a public meeting.

One, from the right, and one from

Labour, The 'leave' argument left their audience as clear a mud about what Brexit might look like. Their conflicting visions and their confusion generated mirth in the audience as one proposed that "liberation" would herald the creation of a socialist republic of Europe while the city slicker shaped the vision more akin to Singapore with the ditching of the social chapter at the heart of his reforms.

The out crowd did not convince even a sceptical audience unsure of whether they were advocates from the Tea Party or the Tooting Revolutionary Front.

This confusion and conflict is from a movement that has had 20 years of cajoling, campaigning and cogitating about the world outside of the EU and dream every night of cutting us off from our own continent's most important decision making body.

Neither are recognising that we have total control over non-EU migration and that if Belgium can sell more to India than the UK from within the EU, and Germany sells to countries whose names the Foreign Office can hardly spell, solutions to increasing trade might lie closer to home.

And day one in paradise out of the EU was given a reality check. At the heart of their confusion is that the UK will get a better deal than we can get within the club. It seems totally unrealistic that we go from being a victim of Europe – kicked around by "Johnny Foreigner" one day but then miraculously as we storm out we will be able

to cut the most fantastical deal with Europe. From victim to conqueror in one day; project unreality.

But of all moments to consider leaving this is the most ludicrous time to be considering running for the door because Europe is moving our way.

The Digital Single Market is on its way and with over 70 per cent of all digital businesses in Europe being British, this will create huge opportunities to Kent's small and medium companies.

There is the Services Single Market, which will totally change the balance of trade between the UK and Europe, making us a net exporter.

Those who want us to leave talk about unilateral trade deals with the US. But with a European deal we will benefit the UK disproportionately as US companies entering the European market are more likely to locate their whole European HQs in the UK.

And few also consider that within 10 years Europe will have signed trade deals with over 80 per cent of the world's population.

Europe is far from perfect, but let's not lose what we have already – to buy into a future no one can agree on, because there is no going back if splendid isolation fails.

What do you think? Do you agree? Do you think Kent will be worse off in or out of Europe? Share your views and join the debate. Email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk or write to The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP.



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A New Day dawns for our festival season

Of a certain age and like your rock authentic? Then you are in for a treat this summer as another big event rolls into town

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A FEW years ago, Kent's transformation from music festival wasteland to overcrowded marketplace was complete.

There was the Hop Farm Festival in Paddock Wood pulling in the likes of Prince, Morrissey and Bob Dylan. Lounge on the Farm in Canterbury attracting the likes of Ellie Goulding, Nile Rodgers and The Vaccines and a flurry of other events everywhere from Faversham to Beckenham.

But, one-by-one, they have started to fall from the calendar.

The Hop Farm Festival in its original form - spearheaded by legendary promoter Vince Power - imploded after failing to make the sums add up. And when another promoter stepped into his shoes in 2014 he discovered that trying to balance the huge bill to hire the best bands and facilities meant anything less than a high ticket price sell-out made your bank manager very upset indeed. It went too.

Lounge on the Farm was turfed out of its traditional Merton Farm home in the cathedral city and vowed to relocate. Two years on from its last outing and it appears to have gone missing without trace.

The green shoots of recovery, however, are now sprouting in outdoor venues. And the solution appears to be modest scale and a line-up aimed at a very specific audience.

Hence the Ramblin' Man Fair event in Maidstone has found that classic rock shifts enough tickets to ensure the Mote Park festival returns this summer. For those with a penchant for denim and long hair (or, at least, those who used to) they have been licking their lips at the prospect of Whitesnake, Thin Lizzy (at least those who have survived), Europe, Thunder, Hawkwind and Procul Harum.

And now an audience of a similar age have the prospect of a new addition in the grounds of Mount Ephraim between Canterbury and Faversham.

It is hoping the more mature classic and prog rock fan will find its array of talent enough to splash out for a

weekend ticket.

A New Day Festival dawns on August 5 for three days.

Dave Rees, from Newcastle, is leading the team behind it and they are convinced the audience it is aimed at are poorly served so far.

His bill includes the likes of Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull, Wilko Johnson and The Stranglers.

Mr Rees told us: "We know there have been a few Kent festivals that have come and gone over the years, but perhaps they were being aimed at the wrong type of fan.

"There is a small group of us and we are all music lovers. We wanted to put on the type of show we wanted to go and see, and judging by the ticket sales so far, it seems there are many like us."

His background is certainly in the music rather than business side.

He said: "I have run a Jethro Tull magazine for some years now and it's just what we all love to do."

The 58-year-old said: "We have been doing that for the past 30 years and there have been a few Jethro Tull books over the years too.



"A few of us, about 11 years ago, started up a festival called WeyFest in Surrey.

"It was a little thing in a pub car park to start with and it just got bigger and bigger and is quite successful now.

"A couple of us had a bit of a falling out with the others so this year, we decided to move to Kent. We remember the Mount Ephraim site from previous years back in the noughties, so we decided to come back there."

Electric Gardens ran in 2006 and 2007 and packed a decent punch.

Headliners included the Happy Mondays, Calvin Harris, Supergrass, Plan B and The Fratellis. But after one of the organisers fell ill it was scrapped.

Now A New Day is filling the nine-year void.

Says Mr Rees: "We know Electric Gardens was on for a couple of years, but they were bit modern for us.

"So we are trying to do in Canterbury what we did at WeyFest, which if you have seen the line up is basically some classic and prog rock, the blues with some folk stuff in there too with Steeleye Span."



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INSPIRATION: Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull will be headlining

After Mr Rees and one other left WeyFest, they were determined to keep going and there is now a team of seven behind A New Day.

He said: "The knowledge we obtained during our time with Weyfest has proved to be invaluable. The festival team is just a group of friends, all of whom have 'proper jobs', who decided to join us and help with their various fields of expertise and, essentially, money. Most of us have invested our life savings to ensure every-

thing runs as smoothly as possible with no possibility of cancellation. We will be making this an annual event, hopefully."

Other classic bands on the bill include Canterbury's own Caravan, Dutch prog-rockers Focus, The Blockheads and The Martin Barre Band. Capacity of the event is 5,000 a day.

For full details and to buy tickets see www.anewdayfestival.com. Tickets can be for the weekend with camping or single days.



STARS: Anna Phoebe, left, and Martin Barre, above, will both be performing at the three-day festival

POP OVER THE BORDER FOR MORE MUSICAL EVENTS

FORGOTTEN Fields Festival in Eridge Park near Tunbridge Wells is going ahead again this year - and although, strictly speaking just across the county border in East Sussex, is set to pull in plenty of Kent fans.

Also taking place over the weekend of August 5-7 the event has a strong line-up with the likes of Suede, Dizzee Rascal, Kelis, Kodaline, the Sugarhill Gang and Kula Shaker all performing.

Artists will be spread out over a

number of stages and there will also be a cinema, fairground and kids zone.

The inaugural festival last year proved a sell-out success. The event comes from the same team that has staged the successful Kendal Calling event in Cumbria.

The team behind Forgotten Fields said: "Last year's sold-out inaugural event was a massive success, with an eclectic programme of great music and attractions. This year it's set to be

bigger and better than before.

"We aim to combine picturesque surroundings with an intimate atmosphere."

Tickets are on sale through www.forgottenfields.co.uk.

And if you're after something else, then LeeFest continues to go from strength to strength. First held in the founder's back garden, it is now a major annual festival which will be located close to Tunbridge Wells this summer. Exact details are kept secret.



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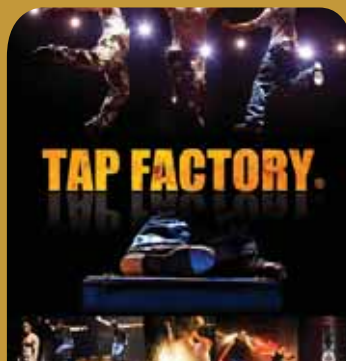
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Chelsea entry to go to legion village

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

AGARDEN designed for this year's Chelsea Flower Show is to be donated to a village for military veterans in Aylesford.

It will form the centre piece of a new housing development at the Royal British Legion Village site in Aylesford.

The development will provide much-needed permanent homes for injured, wounded and sick former soldiers at the village which already provides a host of industries and facilities for veterans.

The purpose built apartments, expected to be completed by the end of the year, are specifically designed to support the mobility needs of 300 ex-servicemen and women, and to help them to live independent lives.

Including a residential nursing home as well as assisted living and supported housing schemes, it also focuses on rehabilitation, with a number of activities and opportunities on offer to help those who may feel isolated re-integrate back into society.

And now it will have a garden area to be proud of after it was revealed this week the Chelsea Barracks Garden, designed by Cranbrook's leading garden stylist, Jo Thompson, will form the centrepiece of the village.

It is due to be one of the star turns at the Royal Horticultural Society's



DESIGNS: Artist's impression of how the garden will look during April's Chelsea Flower Show

most celebrated horticultural event, the Chelsea Flower Show, which takes place this April.

Sponsors Qatari Diar will also be supporting two veterans resident at the village to undertake training and gain formal qualifications in horticulture, to enable them to carry out maintenance for the garden in its new location.

James Rudoni, director of Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) Liv-

ing, said: "We are absolutely delighted by this generous donation.

"It will be wonderful to have a garden designed by Jo Thompson at the heart of our new housing development, where it will contribute to the rehabilitation and recovery of veterans who have sacrificed so much to serve their country.

"One of the RBLI's core missions is to help former members of the Armed Forces learn new skills and improve

their employability as they transition to civilian life, so we are extremely pleased that Qatari Diar is also providing an opportunity for two veterans to receive horticulture training as part of this donation."

Ms Thompson, who will be attending her eighth year at the show, said: "I am thrilled that the garden will be going to such a worthwhile home.

"The Chelsea Barracks Garden will be a traditional British rose garden,

reimagined for the 21st century.

"I very much hope it will provide ex-service personnel with a beautiful place to enjoy and a tranquil setting to reflect, as well as offering the chance for residents to get involved with a range of activities to aid their recovery."

The design is inspired by the heritage of the Chelsea Barracks site in London, the former British Army barracks, with cues taken from the architecture and landscaping of the new development, which neighbours the Royal Hospital, where the flower show has been held since 1913.

Roses, with perennial planting between, will be a main feature of the garden, and they reference the listed Garrison Chapel, with its stained glass Rose Window, which is preserved at the heart of the new development on the Chelsea Barracks site.

A spokesperson for Qatari Diar added: "We have been very impressed by the valuable work done by the RBLI to support ex-service men and women as they transition to civilian life.

"Given the important military heritage of the Chelsea Barracks site, the Royal British Legion Village in Kent seems the perfect home for the garden.

"We are delighted to secure a permanent legacy for the Chelsea Barracks Garden and to know it will make a positive contribution to this community of veterans for years to come."

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Family's agony as 'The Legend' dies in Vietnam waterfall tragedy

Police continue to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of Deal's Christian Sloan, 24, and two sisters, after they fell while exploring a waterfall. This week his family paid tribute to him

THE family of a former Royal Navy sailor who died while climbing waterfalls in Vietnam have paid tribute to him, saying he was one of "life's one offs".

Christian Sloan, 24, from Deal, died along with sisters Beth Anderson, 24, and Isobel Mackenzie Squire, 19, from Sheffield, at the Datanla waterfalls in Lam Dong province last Friday.

It remains unclear exactly how the three holidaymakers died, but it is believed the investigation centres around potentially going with an unofficial guide who may not have provided the proper safety equipment.

Vietnamese authorities have subsequently suspended the tour firm involved. The tour guide is being quizzed by police as part of the investigation.

Reports suggested the trio fell in an area clearly marked with warnings as to the dangers in both English and Vietnamese.

This week, the family of Mr Sloan, who attended the former Walmer Science College, issued a statement

through Kent Police. It is understood his father flew to Vietnam on Monday.

The statement said: "Christian was a hard-working, very popular, Deal lad who was well known around the town as 'The Legend' for his lovely smile, keep fit and lust for life attitude.

"He lived at Walmer Way with his mum Lesley, ward manager at Deal Hospital and dad Eugene a civil servant.

"He attended Warden House Primary School and played for the school rugby team, later moving onto Walmer Science College, he soon became a popular lad known for his cheeky smile.

"He was part of a big crowd of Deal friends well known for enjoying holidays around the world and attending the large summer festivals around the country."

The family said that Mr Sloan had followed in the footsteps of his sister Katie-Leigh by joining the Royal Navy in 2008 for which he served as a marine engineer mechanic on board aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious and Type 42 destroyer HMS Edinburgh.

His family said a career highlight was being selected to represent HMS Sultan for its navy field gun team.

After the navy, he worked as a shift co-ordinator at DFDS Seaways at Dover's Eastern Docks, where colleagues lit Chinese lanterns on Monday in his memory.

The family said that Mr Sloan left the UK on January 4 with friend James McGlashan to go travelling in Thailand and south east Asia including Vietnam.

They continued: "Christian worked many extra shifts to help fund the trip and much planning was made to make sure they got their trip of a lifetime right.



TRIBUTES: Christian Sloan grew up in Deal and worked at Dover Eastern Docks

"As well as meeting up with fellow travellers from Deal, Christian made many many friends along the way and the overwhelming support from these friends from across the world is testament to this.

"Christian's family would like to thank everyone for the support and condolences at this very difficult and trying time. Christian was a larger-than-life character, the kind of person that you knew instantly was one of life's 'one offs', he will leave an enormous void in the lives of his Mum and Dad, brother Ashley, sister Katie-Leigh, his nephews and nieces and all that knew him. He will be missed and remembered forever."

The two sisters, who were from the Ecclesall area of Sheffield, were seven weeks into a backpacking tour of Asia when tragedy struck.

In a statement released earlier through South Yorkshire Police, their family said: "Two bright lights have gone out. They shone brightly for 24 and 19 years for everyone who loved and adored them and everyone who came into contact with them. Sisters, Beth and Izzy were living a life of adventure and did so, right to the end."

Vo Anh Tan, deputy director of the Lam Dong joint stock tourist company which manages the Datanla waterfalls, said visitors usually start at the top of the tiered waterfall, which

is popular among Western tourists.

Mr Tan said an unauthorised local private tour operator arranged the tour and apparently did not pay for entrance tickets and did not use the company's safety equipment.

He said the guide was detained by police for questioning.

The bodies were recovered downstream from the waterfall.

Police believe the tourists might have slipped when exploring the area.

A Foreign Office spokesman said: "We are providing support to the families of three British nationals following their deaths near Da Lat, Vietnam. Our sympathies are with their families and friends at this difficult time."



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CHEERS: Despite some miserable weather, the sun came out as the Princess Royal met residents and those behind the new homes in Iden Green, near Cranbrook. All pics: Paul Bennett

Royal visit is crowning glory for affordable village development

Princess Anne returns to the parish where she went to school to officially unveil homes designed to ensure those growing up in the village are not priced out of the market by exorbitant asking prices

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

THE Princess Royal gave the royal seal of approval to a new affordable housing development in Kent this week. She visited Vyvyan Cottages in Iden Green, near Cranbrook, on Wednesday to see for herself the new homes - which are in addition to six built back in 1994.

The homes have been achieved through a community led partnership between the English Rural Housing Association - set up to bring affordable homes for local people in rural villages - Benenden Parish Council, the Harmsworth Memorial Trust and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

The project has also benefitted from the support of the Kent Rural Housing Enabler, which provides support and advice to parish councils.

The Princess Royal met local residents and viewed one of the affordable houses, before officially opening the new homes on the development.

Princess Anne, the Queen's daughter, is no stranger to the area. She attended the plush Benenden School as a child in the 1960s.

The land for the housing development was made available by the parish council, having been gifted to them by the current Viscount Rothermere at the same time he made land available for the initial six homes. The development is named in tribute to the current Viscount Rothermere's two uncles who died during the First World War.



The affordable homes have been made available at a lower than market rent and planning restrictions ensure that local households with a connection to the village have priority to live in them.

Adrian Maunders, chief executive of the English Rural Housing Association, said: "The visit will help to promote the benefits that small projects

of affordable rural homes can bring to villages like Iden Green.

"We were especially pleased the Princess Royal is able to visit one of our developments in Kent, where we have a successful track record of working with parish and district councils across the county to provide well designed affordable homes in partnership with and for the benefit

of local communities."

The new homes provides the parish of Benenden with six additional rented homes.

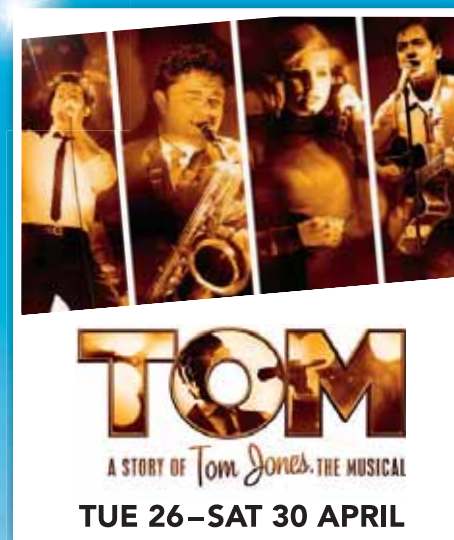
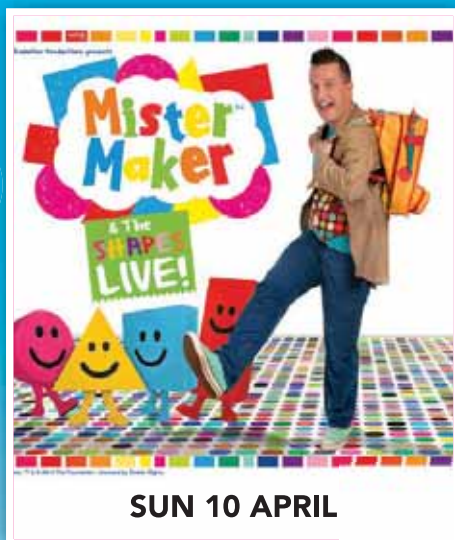
The properties are owned and managed by English Rural and can never be lost to the open market.

The site is known as a 'rural exception site', which means development would not have normally been al-

lowed but an exception to planning policy was made because the homes are designed to be affordable and meet local needs in perpetuity.

The English Rural Housing Association currently owns and manages around 1,200 affordable properties, spread amongst 150 villages, and has a development programme of over 250 additional homes.

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Emergency response team that's ready to tackle county's disasters

Ever wondered what would happen should Kent be hit by a major crisis? The good news is there is a multi-agency team ready to spring into action ready to bring experts to bear to return us to normality

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

AS EMERGENCY teams flocked to Dartford this week to take part in a major drill replicating a disaster in or around the capital (see right), it is worth knowing that Kent has its own crack response organisation.

With threats and risks to the county coming in all shapes and forms, it was decided to form an umbrella organisation to fully co-ordinate all responses.

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 every part of the United Kingdom is required to establish a resilience group with a commonly agreed view on risks in their area.

But Kent went one further and formed the Kent Resilience Forum, based at the county fire services headquarters in Maidstone, with a view to overseeing dangers to the 281 miles of motorway and trunk roads; the busiest shipping lane in the world; busiest passenger port in the world; three power stations and the UK's only high speed rail link.

In short, keeping alert to any of the possible major issues which could impact on our county.

Membership is extensive, and it's hoped having so many partners means that every eventuality will be covered at its forums twice a year.

With over 70 groups, it includes Kent Police, the Civil Nuclear Constabulary, ports, transport, Ministry of Defence, as well as councils, health trusts, coastguard, ambulance, wa-

ter and utility companies, phone companies, and the National Grid.

Its website describes its aim as "to ensure that agencies and organisations plan and work together, to ensure a co-ordinated response to emergencies, that could have a significant impact on communities in Kent".

Chairman of the forum is Kent Police chief constable Alan Pughsley.

He explained: "In times of crisis, the Kent Resilience Forum brings together partners and agencies to ensure a co-ordinated, efficient and effective response. We bring the experts from each of the specialist services together, with tried and tested plans, to deliver the right response to each situation, providing the communities in Kent with the best service possible."

Director of operations for Kent Fire and Rescue, Sean Bone-Knell, chair-

man of the executive group of the forum, added: "The forum is committed to providing a co-ordinated response should the worst happen, ready to act quickly to keep the public safe and help get the county back on its feet again. A huge amount of unseen work goes on behind the scenes.

"Last year alone, the forum and Kent Resilience team put plans in place to respond to 67 severe weather warnings, 67 flood alerts and 10 incidents of actual flooding. They prepared for 20 power outages, six unexploded bombs, two gas leaks and even a beached whale."

With the resilience team, Kent is the first county to integrate its major blue light and local authority emergency planning teams in this way.

It includes Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Kent Police and Kent County Council, in partnership with the Environment Agency, NHS England, Medway Council and district councils.

Team manager Chris Else said: "The simple step of having our main emergency planning officers in the same team rather than spread across different organisation immediately made a big difference.

"Being in the same office meant we could share information and expertise especially during major emergencies to provide a more robust service for the county. That avoids duplication of effort and leads to savings, but more importantly it provides a more joined up approach that helps keep local people safe and protected."

He said it is an acknowledged fact that when a community spends time preparing for an emergency in ad-



RESILIENCE TEAM IN ACTION

OPERATION Stack was a nightmare for so many last year - but the resilience team was there to help organise welfare arrangements during the emergency.

It said the first week of Operation Stack took place during a heat wave, which could have been potentially dangerous for the welfare of lorry drivers. The team worked with community wardens and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency to source and distribute water and food.

In one 36 hour period alone they distributed 40,000 litres of water and 7,000 meals to 6,000 freight

drivers covering 38 miles.

Over the last couple of years they have also dealt with emergencies including the potential east coast surge in December 2013 when high sea levels threatened to flood many parts of the county.

Working with its extensive partners they co-ordinated the evacuation of homes and found a place of safety in local rest centres.

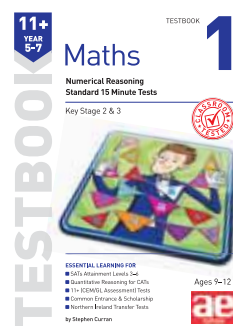
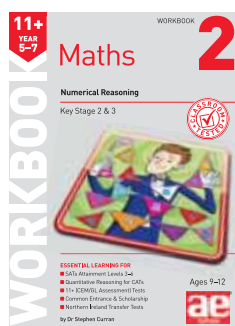
The team provided assistance in checking for vulnerable people in the area and getting the right rest centre staff from the right organisations to attend and deliver the help needed.

House fires or gas leaks can happen at any time and mean people can't return to their home or place of work. The team provided assistance to support the people affected by the Tannery Lane fire in Canterbury last year when a huge blaze ripped through flats on the city centre ring road.

It worked with Canterbury City Council to provide welfare and rest centres, and other support through voluntary agencies such as Kent Support and Assistance Service, British Red Cross and the Critical Incident Chaplaincy Service.



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'Train crash' exercise puts city experts in the rubble

Emergency services from across the capital descended on Dartford for most of the week for multi-million pound drill

By Luke May

luke.may@archant.co.uk

MORE than 1,000 casualties, tube carriages flung into the air, and a building collapse. A dreaded scenario for London's emergency services, but one they spent the week getting to grips with in a disused power station in the county this week.

Crews from across the capital headed into the former Littlebrook Power Station, close to the QEII Bridge, where they faced a remarkable staged disaster.

Real tube trains, tonnes of concrete, and 'casualties' covered in blood - some 'dead', some 'dying' - all ensured fire, police, ambulance and other services could be put through their paces as part of Europe's biggest disaster training scenario, known as an exercise unified response (EUR).

The site was made up to look like Waterloo tube station had been crushed by a falling building, with more than £1million worth of donations coming from Transport for London, who supplied the train carriages and station props and McGee demolition group, who donated thousands of tonnes of rubble.

Crews from London Fire Brigade, Metropolitan Police and London Ambulance Service all attended as part of the exercise, which ran from Mon-

day to Thursday.

Emergency response teams from Cyprus, Italy and Hungary also assisted during the training sessions, staying at Woolwich Barracks.

The £770,000 programme is being funded by the European Commission Exercise Programme and is being co-ordinated by London Fire Brigade on behalf of the London Resilience Partnership.

The commission currently offers mechanisms which exist so that any European state can request assistance from other EU countries in the wake of a disaster.

London Fire commissioner Ron Dobson, said: "You can't get this sort of experience from a text book, we need to play it like it's real and ensure that should the worst happen, our response is effective and well coordinated."

"We are working with Transport for London, local councils and various voluntary organisations to simulate the wider and longer term impacts that any major disaster would have on the community."

"Although this scenario is not a terrorist attack, we were practising procedures and systems that are common to any emergency that results in a large number of fatalities and injuries."

"The exercise was also rigorously observed by independent evaluators and any lessons learned will be used to improve the way in which we respond to future emergency incidents in the south east."



RESPONSE: Emergency crew participants respond to the mock tube station disaster, which featured more than 1,000 casualties and thousands of tonnes of rubble as part of the training exercise. All pics: London Fire Brigade

RISKS FROM WHAT?

THEY could come from anywhere, and by anything. But the forum lists as some of the key risks it over-watches as oil pollution; reservoir inunda-

tion; severe weather; structural; human health; animal health; industrial action; international events; industrial technical failure; transport ac-

cident; industrial accidents and environmental pollution; threats; mass gatherings; East coast flooding risks; and inland flooding

G in their area and have the right contacts to call when assistance is needed. The Kent Resilience Forum also works with district and parish councils to develop community resilience plans and have produced the 'What should I do in an emergency?' guide - described as "an handbook that could save your life".

They have also provided training

for volunteers from other organisations across the county to help them work together with the emergency services and members of the forum in an emergency.

The team said: "We all hope that the worst won't happen, but when it does - whether it's a flood, an explosion, or a major road crash - it's good to know that plans are in place to help those caught up in the emergency."

It's something most of us take for granted, but behind the scenes, organisations like Kent Police, Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent Fire and Rescue, KCC Highways and the Environment Agency work hard to make sure they are ready to deal with emergency situations of all kinds. This includes working with police to respond to any local terrorist attack."

KEEPING SAFE

EVERYONE thinks "it'll never happen to me" until it does. So there are some routine steps to do before anything happens.

1. Check if you are in a flood-risk area - if so, sign up for flood alerts at www.gov.uk/check-if-youre-at-risk-of-flooding

2. Keep valuable documents upstairs where you can reach them easily

3. Keep an emergency grab bag with the basics like first aid kit, spare essential medication, a torch with spare batteries, candles and matches, a battery radio with spare batteries, bottled wa-

ter, and ready to eat food.

4. Keep a list of your important telephone numbers

5. Make an emergency plan with your family. It will help with things like where to meet if home is evacuated, who gets the children from school, which neighbours to check on, where are the mains taps for turning off the gas, water and electricity, who can we stay with, and details on an 'Emergency Friend' to collect medicines and vitals if you can't.

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Academy joy for Rylance in Spielberg thriller role

Ashford-born actor was one of surprise winners at the glitzy bash in California in the early hours of Monday morning

By Rob Middleton

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

HEMAY still remain a relatively unknown personality, but Mark Rylance's ability to dazzle across every stage upon which he steps continued last weekend as he took home his first Academy Award.

Born in Ashford, but leaving the UK when he was just a toddler after his family moved to the US, he claimed the best supporting Oscar for his role in the critically acclaimed Steven Spielberg thriller *Bridge of Spies*.

His win was seen as something of a surprise to many who had expected Rocky star Sylvester Stallone deliver the knock-out blow for his role in the movie *Creed*.

By winning the Oscar, Rylance also beat off competition from Mark Ruffalo and fellow Brits Christian Bale and Tom Hardy.

In his acceptance speech, he took a swipe at politicians, praising the leadership of movie director Steven Spielberg.

He said: "I've always just adored stories, hearing them, seeing them, being in them, so for me to have the chance to work with, I think, one of the greatest storytellers of our time, Steven Spielberg, it's just been such an

honour.

"And unlike some of the leaders we're being presented with these days, he leads with such love that he's surrounded by masters in every craft on his film, every craft, not the least, Mr Tom Hanks.

"I'm so pleased that our film has been nominated so many times, and as a face of the film, I meet many people in the streets and it's lovely to have them."

Backstage, Rylance said he did not know where he would display his Oscar and reflected on his feelings on out-punching Rocky.

He said: "I find people come up and say things about competing as actors, and I know it's necessary to make a show out of it. But those actors are so good. I feel more like I'm a spokesman when I win and there are so many other wonderful actors that weren't in the category, Idris Elba, Paul Dano."

Rylance also reflected on turning down a chance to work on *Empire Of The Sun*, a multi Oscar nominated movie with Spielberg in 1986 so he could do a season of plays.

He told reporters: "The season of plays didn't go that well but I met my wife on the first day and I've been able to work with Steven again so I think I made an OK call."

Rylance, who flew over from New York to attend the ceremony in Los Angeles - he had been unable to attend the Baftas in London - where he is starring in a theatrical production of *Nice Fish*, added: "It's very exciting and you feel very grand being driven from a small theatre in Brooklyn in a black car and then being flown in a powerful jet with big windows you can look out and see Chicago, where I used to live, in the distance.

"It's a trippy experience and to have so many people you don't know come up and say nice things to you, I recommend it."

However, Rylance said he did not know how much the award would change his career, adding: "I will find out I guess. I've been very lucky in getting interesting work coming my way and generating interesting work myself so we will see. It's just nice to be celebrated."

Having left for the US in his youth, he returned to the UK in his teens as he looked to make a name for himself



GLORY: Mark Rylance, left, with Steven Spielberg and the director's wife, Kate Capshaw.

as an actor.

Having trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (Rada), the 56-year-old began his acting career at Glasgow's Citizens' Theatre in the early 1980s, later joining the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) in Stratford-upon-Avon and London.

He has since gone on to win every major acting award including the Bafta, and now the Oscar, for his portrayal of Soviet spy Rudolf Abel in *Bridge Of Spies*.

He is primarily known for his successful stage career having won mul-

tiple Olivier Awards for *Much Ado About Nothing* in 1994, *Jerusalem* in 2010 as well as the Tony Award for *Boeing Boeing* in 2008 and *Jerusalem* in 2011.

He was the first artistic director of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London, a position he held for 10 years.

More recently, he has become better known for film and TV roles, playing Thomas Cromwell in the 2015 BBC Two mini-series *Wolf Hall*. That series filmed extensive in Kent - with scenes shot at both Penshurst Place and Dover Castle during the summer

of 2014.

However, he has limited his performances on the big and small screen preferring, instead, to remain true to his theatrical roots.

Married to playwright Claire van Kampen since 1989, he pulled out of the London 2012 Olympics opening ceremony following the death of his 28-year-old step daughter, film-maker Nataasha van Kampen. He had been due to take a central role in the opening ceremony, reading from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, and was replaced by Kenneth Branagh.

AND THE WINNERS WERE....

LEONARDO DiCaprio ended years of disappointment while *Spotlight* was the surprise winner of best picture on an Oscars night dominated by the diversity controversy.

Hollywood heartthrob DiCaprio beat Eddie Redmayne, Bryan Cranston, Matt Damon and Michael Fassbender to take home the best actor gong for his role in *The Revenant* at the 88th Academy Awards.

The star was first nominated for an Oscar 23 years ago in a supporting role, and has since been nominated four more times for acting, including this year, but had never won until now.

Newspaper drama *Spotlight* was the underdog in the best picture category but was triumphant in beating favourite *The Revenant* to the coveted award.

Thought of as the top honour handed out by the Academy, *Spotlight* was not widely expected to win best picture and the film won only one other award on the night, taking the gong for best original screenplay.

Such a sparsely-awarded best picture winner has not appeared since 1952's *The Greatest Show On Earth*.

Spotlight is about the Boston Globe's investigative reporting on sexual abuse by Roman Catholic



FINALLY: Leonardo DiCaprio wins his first Academy Award

priests.

The film, which was nominated for six Oscars, looks at the scandal in Boston, and the collusion and reluctance of the local community to face up to it.

Host Chris Rock did not shy away from the diversity issues plaguing this year's awards and opened the ceremony by declaring Hollywood is "racist" and admitting he considered boycotting the ceremony because of the absence of black nominees.

Room star Brie Larson was named best actress in a leading role, and *The Revenant*'s Alejandro

G Inarritu was named best director for the second year in a row.

The most awards of the night went to *Mad Max: Fury Road*, which managed to take home six Oscars in total, followed by *The Revenant* with three and *Spotlight* winning two.

British singer Sam Smith picked up the best original song Oscar and dedicated his award to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community.

Smith co-wrote the song *Writing's On The Wall* with fellow Briton Jimmy Napes for the latest James Bond movie, *Spectre*.



GLORY: Rylance clutches statue

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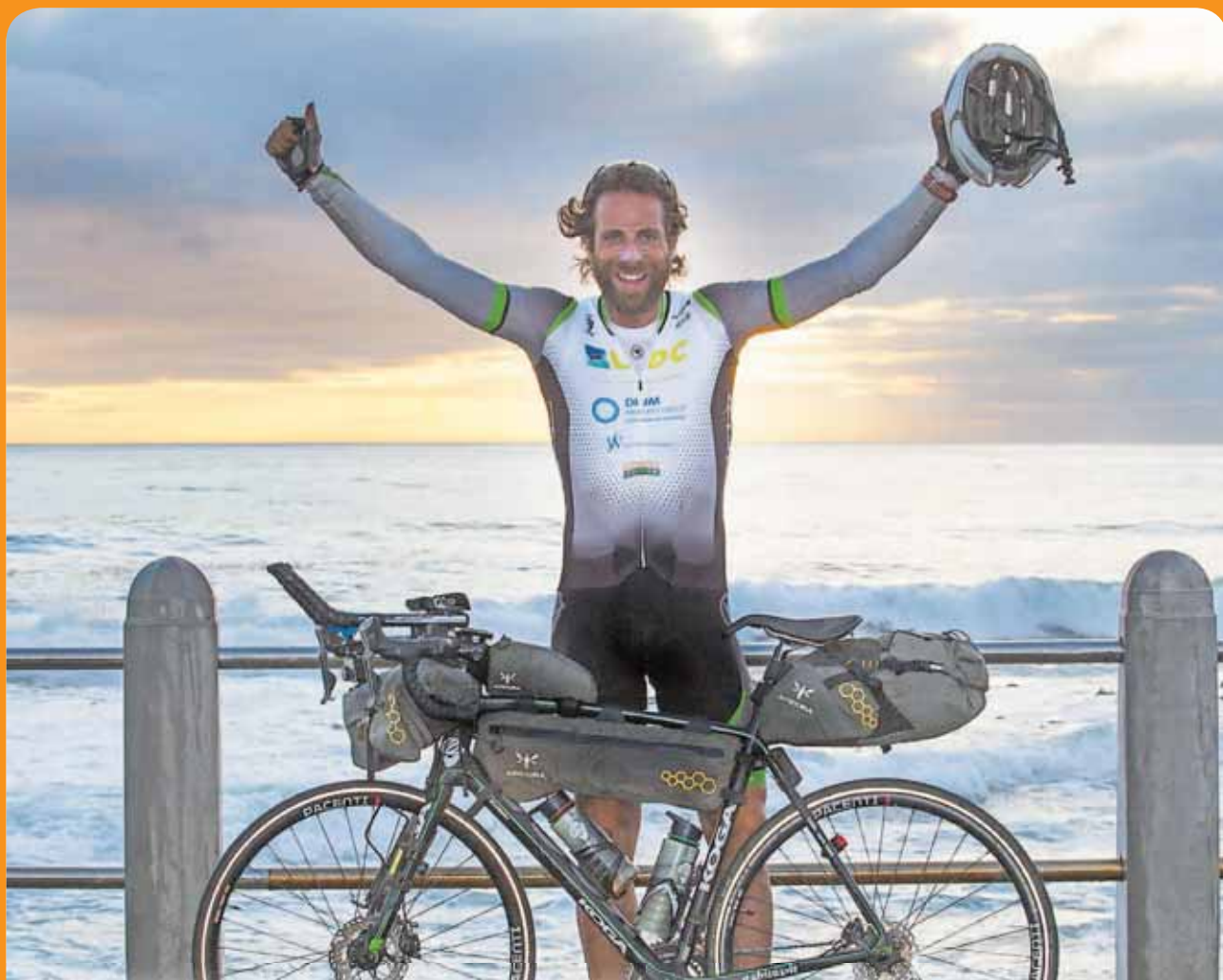
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ADVENTURE: Mark Beaumont cycled across Africa and will talk about his adventures in his new stage show

Mark Beaumont discusses his solo cycle through Africa

Molly Kersey-Law speaks to the ultra-endurance cyclist ahead of his Kent date

RECORD-BREAKING cyclist Mark Beaumont will be discussing his latest adventure in a new stage show.

He will be performing Africa Solo at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, later this month.

The show tells the story of his solo cycle through Africa, during which he made his way from Cairo to Cape Town in under 42 days, cycling an average of 160 miles each day.

As well as detailing his travels through deserts and across mountains, he will be discussing those who helped to make the journey possible - the people of Africa and his team in the UK who got him prepared.

"When you ride from top to toe you have got the extremes of the Sahara Desert and savannahs," he told KoS.

"It's a country of extremes."

And he got to see some incredible wildlife along the way.

"It's scary riding past young bull elephants at night but it's exciting too," he said.

"The simple part is being on the bike, the rest is the adventure.

"I had no idea where I was going to stay each night. I was riding until dark and would get to a village or town and was relying on just finding somewhere.

"I never had to unpack the tent which I had with me, which says a lot," he added.

"There were some incredibly tough bits but the overall message was that it was friendly and welcoming."

Cycling through Africa was the latest in a string of adventures for Mr Beaumont, who previously cycled the world in 195 days and

later carried out a solo cycle of the Americas.

"Africa was the perfect hat-trick in my book," he said.

"They are the three ultimate adventure rides."

Mr Beaumont carried out a number of cycling challenges from a young age, and began ultra-endurance cycling after graduating from Glasgow University - where he studied economics and politics - thinking it would be something of a 'last hurrah' before entering the world of work.

"I at no point thought I could make a job out of it," he said.

"I thought 'if you're going to do it go big', so I cycled around the world. For years I thought I'd become an accountant but I haven't yet."

He said that he is looking forward to being back on stage.

"This is my third UK theatre show," he said.

"Typically it's a really mixed audience. I'm always amazed, it's all ages and all backgrounds.

"People get to hear more about what happened behind the scenes rather than just what they watch on the telly.

"They get to share in the adventures.

"I guess we have all got that passion to explore the world and explore people.

"There's an opportunity to find out more and ask questions."

Africa Solo, which is presented by Speakers From The Edge, will be performed on March 22 at 7.30pm.

Tickets to the show are £14.50.

For further information or to book you can visit www.assembly-halltheatre.co.uk or call the box office on 01892 530613.

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Women Seeking

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DANCE partner, 70-75, sought by lady in Tunbridge Wells area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421071

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+. Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 3003 Box 419673

GENUINE single female 49, seeking good-natured, intelligent, polite, single male for friendship/relationship. Text only to Mailbox: 4198603

SUE 38yrs, passionate, broadminded and feisty seeks discreet fun with Mr Wrong! Tel No: 0906 515 3035 Box 413007

KIND, caring lady of African origin, living in UK for past 20 years, looking for a gentleman who is kind and caring, must have a GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421041

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 3011 Box: 409715

ANGELA, 53, African origin, looking for a kind, genuine, caring gentleman, 60 years +. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421039

LUCY first time advertiser, 32yrs, tall slim blonde airline worker, seeks discreet gent, any status for casual fling. Looks/age unimportant. Tel: 0906 515 3027 Box: 420237

DANCE partner 65-75 sought by Maureen, Thanet based lady, slim, brown hair, green eyes, seeking dancing, fun and friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420231

ESSEX lady, mid 60's, adaptable, seeking nice male, likes most things. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418537

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel No: 0906 515 3019 Box: 413399

SINGLE slim female, 68, n/s, GSOH, likes cooking, walking etc, seeks male, single, slim 65-70, n/s, with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420091

KAREN, 42yrs, attractive and broadminded, seeks no strings fun with chap any age, must be discreet. Tel: 0906 515 3039 Box: 407953

SLIM female GSOH, 53, Likes walking, pub lunches, days out, looking for soul mate, smart appearance, similar interests N/S GSOH, easy going. Text only to Mailbox no: 4762600

I'M Chloe, 33yrs old, sensual blonde lady with fabulous figure, workaholic, seeking new circle of men for casual fun. Looks/age/status unimportant. Must be fun and openminded. Tel: 0906 515 3043 Box 420261

KIND lady, 50s, been broken hearted, seeks kind, genuine man for caring relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419889

JASMINE, musical lady, husband in the forces and bored alone. 35yrs but loves older men. ACA. Text only Box: 4161836

PAT, slim, single, 68, non-smoker, GSOH, likes going for walks etc, seeks male, slim, single, 66-70, non-smoker, clean-shaven. GSOH, with similar interests. Canterbury area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081

KAREN, blue eyed blonde, size 14 with a large bust, 46yrs. Give me a call for some discreet chats. Text only Box: 4053061



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MARION, early 70s, young at heart, GSOH, active, likes walking, gardening, meals out, travel, theatre and animals, looking for male friendship to share interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419657

SALLY ANN, care worker for the elderly so loves older men. Im only 29yrs but very mature. Text only Box: 4145714

CHANTELLE, 5ft3 light brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, like nights in/out, walks, animals, romance seeks honest guy. Littlehampton. Text only to Mailbox no: 4923883

MARIE, very lonely middle-aged woman, looking for a kind hearted older man, late 70s/early 80s for friendship/companionship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418955

RACHEL late 40s, blonde, blue eyes and very voluptuous. Looking for a kind, caring honest man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418741

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418117

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243

FEMALE, 59, GSOH, many interests, seeks caring male for fun friendship maybe more, genuine calls only. Text only to Mailbox No: 4819793

GORGEOUS flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417435

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FEMALE easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417603

PAT, 68, young at heart, slim, proud 4' 11" GSOH, N/S, likes walking etc Whistable area, seeks similar slim easy going male 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081

SUSIE fit, friendly, looking for someone to love and look after me, preferably older, N/S male with own car. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392537

HAPPY young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383

KATIE, 5ft 5, slim dark hair, very attractive female, likes most things in life and a good laugh, looking for a similar male. Text only to Mailbox No: 4722127

NICE female looking for decent genuine male for friendship to start out with. Text only to Mailbox No: 4710874

BLONDE female, 5ft 1ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, walks, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409025

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

MAY sexy black African female, 38, hardworking, seeks generous friendly male for mutual rewarding friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416211

ALISON 39, petite with long brown hair, hazel eyes, very loving, seeking similar male for an uncomplicated relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416517

DEBORAH 41, intelligent brunette, lovely brown eyes, discreet, many interests, seeks similar male to share fun and good conversation. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416515

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MALE, 6ft, slim, 67, divorced, retired, likes social drinks, meals out, nights in and all other, WLTm lady with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421351

MATURE cross dressing guy, seeking lady willing to apply a full make over and give a manicure and pedicure. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421341

KEN 61, 6ft, slim, likes socialising, drinking, animals, countryside, seaside, meals out, seeks similar lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 333017

SHY male seeks confident, strong willed lady, to take the lead for mutual fun, looks/age unimportant. ACA Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421223

MALE, 50, 6ft 4ins, well built, divorced gent, looking to date calm and kind lovely lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421195

MALE, 54, looking for discreet lady, 60-70, for adult fun and a special friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421085

BARRY, 50, 6ft, well-built, seeks lovely lady for good times, loving and enjoying life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421047

DAVE 64 solvent, working, not bad looking, would like to meet slim, fun to be with female, 50 to 60, to get to know. Chelmsford area. Text only to Mailbox: 4368820

45 year old male, looking for a happy intelligent friendly female for company and evenings in or out, looks or race unimportant. Text only to Mailbox no: 5063649

RACHEL attractive, blue eyes, blonde, voluptuous, seeking kind, honest, generous kind male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418403

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

MAY sexy black African female, 38, hardworking, seeks generous friendly male for mutual rewarding friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416211

ALISON 39, petite with long brown hair, hazel eyes, very loving, seeking similar male for an uncomplicated relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416517

FEMALE seeking male for adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413809

NEVILLE 5ft 6ins, Caribbean, likes wine, nights in, seeks female to spend the rest of his life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 333911

DAVE 46, seeks active female for walking, climbing and outdoor fun. Days out and evenings in. Friendly and GSOH. Text only to Mailbox no: 5338933

PROFESSIONAL gentleman, just retired, own house, loves holidays, WLTm lady for meals out, and to enjoy each others company. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419751

SIX foot guy, mature, looking for someone special to spend some quality time with. Please leave me a message I would love to hear from you! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420163

HUBERT, lives in Rochester, single, lonely, looking for someone to get together with and make something happen and enjoy the rest of life with! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420049

PAUL 52, seeks loving female for exciting times, meals out, weekends away, cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418077

GARETH handsome 40's pilot, strong tall build, seeks daytime discreet passion with lady 30-65. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414421

MALE 56, likes good conversation, seeks older lady for discreet friendly fun, 50 plus. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419201

YOUNG 60yr old male, knows how to treat a lady, seeking special lady to spoil for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417909

HEALTHY 61yr old male, N/S, medium build, likes France, cooking, gardening, seeks female, 50-60 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 286360

MALE 50, GSOH, looking for soul mate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387485

SIX foot guy, mature, looking for someone special to spend some quality time with. Please leave me a message I would love to hear from you! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420163

ATTRACTIVE white gent, 48, 56ft, romantic, easy going, GSOH, seeking young lady, 60-75 for quality discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410025

BROWN eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377

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PROFESSIONAL, romantic male, 44, likes meals out, cinema, music, holidays, seeks female, 30-55 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 250195

PAUL 48, 5ft 8ins, GSOH, likes music, cinema, seeks female for fun, friendship and LTR. Tunbridge Wells. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 371985

MALE 51, 5ft 8ins, N/S, GSOH, easygoing, seeks slim female, 18-45 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338269

MALE 56 yrs, GSOH, n/s, would like to meet a lady to have happy times, lots of love to give, to enjoy good times in and out. Text only to Mailbox No: 4181244

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ROCKABALLY guy, seeks rock chick, 25-50 who likes 50's rock music and bands. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 284750

WHITE Knight 59 5'10 tall, OHAC, in shining armour, looking for Damsel in Distress of similar age to share fun & laughter. Text only to Mailbox no: 5073004

50YR old divorced white male, passionate, strong, seeking caring lady for romantic, loving relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418641

MALE 47, builder, seeks lady for companionship and closeness, age and looks unimportant. Text only to Mailbox no: 4942811

JOHN, 47, six foot two, well-built, handsome, non-smoker, intelligent and funny, doesn't take himself too seriously, easy to get along with, seeks attractive female, any age, for discreet, adventurous, any time fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419461

RICHARD 59 from East Kent. WLTm genuine female 50 plus for friendship! Text only to Mailbox No: 4448765



PAUL GSOH, 5ft 8ins, medium build, seeking Miss Right for the spark back into life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 391970

NICE looking genuine man would like to meet nice lady any age for company, outings with GSOH. Text only to Mailbox no: 4922399

ANDREW, 63, likes animals, walking, boot fairs, shopping, looking for someone similar living in the Maidstone/Kent area, for possible LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419203

MALE 56 yrs, GSOH, n/s, would like to meet a lady to have happy times, lots of love to give, to enjoy good times in and out. Text only to Mailbox No: 4181244

Gay Seeking

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MATURE guy, loves CD, seeks similar friend for mutual fun, can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421093

MALE likes CD, seeking similar male for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418513

BI guy heavy build, WLTm assertive adventurous white or Indian guy for mutual pleasure. Text only to Mailbox no: 4321273

SUBMISSIVE bi male, clean and shaven, looking for similar male, n/s, for adult fun, can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420413

SENIOR bi male, 70s, n/s, clean-shaven, living in the Maidstone area, seeking similar bi male, aged 50-60, in the Maidstone area, for myself to give service to. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420219

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Billy Bibby and the Wry Smiles set to rock after release of EP

By Molly Kersey-Law

molly.kersy-law@archant.co.uk

BILLY Bibby and the Wry Smiles will be performing at The Middle Eight in Gravesend later this month.

Mr Bibby is the former lead guitarist of rock quartet Catfish and the Bottlemen - who he was with from 2007 to 2014.

Billy Bibby and the Wry Smiles released their debut EP - *Bide Your Time* - in February.

It features songs *Don't Fall*, *This Kind of Summer*, *Waitin' for You* and *Believe Me*.

Speaking about the new EP Mr Bibby explained: "*Bide Your Time* is the first line of a song I wrote that means a great deal to me.

"The song is not on the EP but will be released in the near future.

"That's another reason why I chose this particular title for the EP - right now I'm focusing on the future and what it holds for myself and the band.

"In my opinion it also explains the music business well in that you have to be patient.

"Things don't happen quickly. You've got to regroup, take your



MUSIC: Billy Bibby and the Wry Smiles released their debut EP last month

time, and make the right decisions without rushing it. To have another pop at becoming a successful artist, biding our time is what we have to do.

"I couldn't be more determined at the moment though, and I'm enjoying every minute of it."

Speaking about how he wanted his new music to sound he added: "I want to bring back something like Fleetwood Mac's *Rumours* or

Dire Straits' *Brothers in Arms* where there's a bit more going on; there's a bit more depth to the songs, in the vocals, in the harmonies.

"That's what I focused on a lot with this EP - getting those harmonies to a point where they're doing something that hasn't happened for a while in most modern records.

"It's pop-infused, but not just simple pop. It's not country, but it's

got a bit of a twang to it.

"It's indie and it's rock. It's got a little bit of everything. I think the time is right for it."

The band is made up of Mr Bibby, Rob Jones on lead guitar, Matt Thomas on bass and Mike Pearce on drums.

Their Gravesend performance will take place on March 26.

For further details visit www.themiddleeigh8t.co.uk.

Petula Clark in Folkestone

POP icon Petula Clark will be performing at the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone, on October 13.

Tickets start at £25 and they are available to buy now.

For more details visit www.atgtickets.com/folkestone.



Show celebrates Stewart

MUSICAL *Some Guys Have All The Luck* will be performed at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford on March 17.

The show celebrates the career of rock legend Rod Stewart, following his journey from street busker to international star.

To book visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.

Level 42 set to perform

EIGHTIES band Level 42 will perform at the Margate Winter Gardens on October 12.

Their hits include *Lessons In Love* and *Hot Water*.

For details visit www.margatewintergardens.co.uk.



Sibling trio due at festival

FOLKESTONE sibling trio, Orfila, will be performing at the Country to Country musical festival at the 02 Arena in Greenwich.

They were chosen by Yamaha Music London after taking part in a competition.

The festival lasts from March 11 to 13.

Visit www.c2c-countrytocountry.com to book

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Week-ending March 6, 2016 **39**

Steel Magnolias on stage

STEEL Magnolias will be performed by the Gravesend Theatre Guild at their theatre on Vale Road, Northfleet.

The show runs from March 10 to 12 at 7.30pm.
To book call 07497 357286.



Stoker's Dracula adapted

A STAGE adaptation of Bram Stoker's gothic horror novel Dracula will be performed at the Theatre Royal Margate, by members of their Youth Theatre.

The production will run from April 14 to 16 with performances at 7pm.
Call 01843 292795 to book.

The heady days of Jackie

RELIVING the days of Jackie magazine, Jackie The Musical will be performed at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, from March 22 to 26.

To book tickets visit www.atgtickets.com/bromley.



Sean Lock keeping it light

COMEDIAN Sean Lock will be bringing his stand-up show, Keep It Light, to Chatham.

He will be performing at the Central Theatre on September 23 at 8pm.

Tickets are £23.

For more information or to book you can visit www.tickets.medway.gov.uk.

Can young love survive divide in Ireland's Call?

By Molly Kersey-Law

molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk

AN adaptation of critically-acclaimed show Essence of Ireland will be performed in Dartford. Ireland's Call will be at the Orchard Theatre on March 29.

The show tells the story of Sean Dempsey, who, at the end of the Second World War, leaves his home in Ireland and childhood sweetheart Cora in search of a better life in the 'Big Apple'.

Can their love survive the Atlantic divide?

The show features young dancers from Kent's Turner Academy of Irish dance and performer Leanne Kyte, who is originally from Dartford.

It includes well-known songs such as Galway Girl, Isle of Hope Isle Of Tears, I Loved Her First, Tell Me Ma, Irish Rover and the title song - Ireland's Call.

Creative director Ged Graham said: "We are really looking forward to bringing the show to stages across the world, starting with some of the UK's most prestigious venues in 2016, a year set to be a huge celebration of Irish



culture to commemorate the centenary of The Easter Rising."

Also known as the Easter Rebellion, this saw an armed insurrection in Ireland during Easter week.

Mr Graham was born in Dublin and remembers moving to the UK at the age of nine.

He said: "Everyone has been separated from loved ones and their homes at some point in their lives, so this is a story that people can really engage with and relate to, myself included."

"The audience is drawn in to the story and swept on a journey that is both heartbreaking and heartwarming."

"It is set against a backdrop of key historical events including America's introduction to rock and roll, the rebuilding of London post World War Two and John F Kennedy's historic presidential visit to Ireland in 1963. It's a story full of emotional highs and lows."

For more details or to book visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk or call 01322 220000.



PERFORMER: Leanne Kyte is originally from Dartford



MUSICAL: Ireland's Call will be on stage later this month

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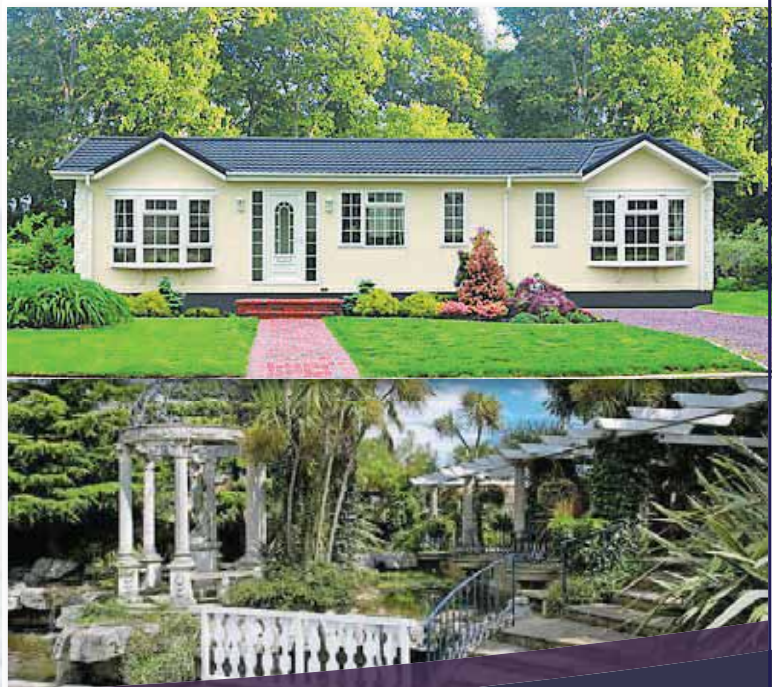
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family-owned & run Lockharts of Canterbury offer a huge selection and can bespoke make to your specifications, great if you have an odd shape or size. There are 40 various styles on display at their site at Harbledown, near Canterbury, and there's always someone on-hand to offer that friendly & professional service 7 days a week of people. They will also construct a

suitable base if required, usually concrete, depending on the size of the building. They use quality, pre-treated hardwood, cedar & oak timber; preserved inside & out, and furnishings such as double glazed windows and door furniture are top quality. They will arrange a free site visit to assess the space in your garden and make suitable recommendations so you can enjoy your building! They will advise on planning permission if required. One of these rules is that the eaves height mustn't exceed 2.5 metres if within 2 metres from your boundary, this applies to the majority of people. They will also construct a suitable base if required, usually concrete, depending on the size of the building. Once you have made your selection, installation is normally done within 3 weeks of placing your order. The area where the building

will go will need to be cleared prior to the delivery date. The company pride themselves on their service, leaving you peace of mind that your building will be fully waterproof, look great and serve it's purpose. They'll also clear up after themselves to ensure your garden is left how they found it!

They can also recommend local electricians who they work with if you want additional extra's such as lighting & heating. Wall-mounted air-con/ heating units are ideal for chalets as these can get rather warm on a hot summers day too.

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How to make flavour-full and gluten-free food

Naomi Devlin has released a new cookbook which features 120 gluten-free recipes and baking ideas

SINCE she and her son were diagnosed with coeliac disease almost a decade ago, Naomi Devlin has dedicated her time to making wholesome and flavoursome gluten-free cooking more accessible.

From bespoke teaching days held in her family kitchen, to her booked-out cookery classes at River Cottage - the base of operations seen in chef Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's TV series - she's a woman on a dietary mission, and the latest string to her bow is her much-anticipated debut book, River Cottage Gluten Free.

"I've always wanted to write a cookbook," says the 42-year-old.

"I started blogging almost nine years ago after I found out that I

[needed to be] gluten-free, so writing has been a cathartic process."

Ms Devlin doesn't have formal chef schooling - but that hasn't held her back, and the knowledge she's gleaned as a nutritionist, her honest approach to food and vitality and first-hand experience of living gluten-free, make up for any gaps.

"Maybe I'd have got there quicker if I'd had some training, but in other ways, because I didn't approach things in the traditional way, I was really open-minded," she reasons.

"I'd often make things backwards," she adds, recalling her early experiments with recipes.

"It was a case of me looking at the ingredients and thinking, 'How would this be good?', rather than,



COOKING: Naomi Devlin wants to make gluten-free more accessible

"How can I recreate this dish?"

It's a formula that seems to have worked: River Cottage Gluten Free is an authentic collection of 120 recipes - from breads to soups and cakes - for anybody looking to cut out gluten without compromising on taste, plus tips on alternative flours, methods of fermentation and baking ideas.

A key aim for Ms Devlin was to produce a cookbook that empowered people to feel confident in cooking gluten-free - a philosophy that applies to her courses too.

As for anybody with coeliac disease, being entirely gluten-free is a non-negotiable part of life for Ms Devlin. However, she acknowledges that increasingly, avoiding gluten can be a lifestyle choice for some people.

"At the beginning, we had a lot of diagnosed coeliacs coming onto the courses to ask, 'What can I eat?' Now there are a lot of people interested in expanding what they eat, or cooking for other people who've had a diagnosis. The demographic has changed, and the way that I teach them has changed," she said.

She applauds anybody seeking to improve their health or wellbeing through diet changes, and isn't a fan of the 'fad' tag often associated with going gluten-free.

"I think it needs to be taken seriously. If someone believes they have an issue, it's real for them. For whatever reason - if it's an emotional thing that they need to have certain foods or whatever, that's OK."

The power of words

FORMER MP Gyles Brandreth will be bringing his new show, Word Power, to Maidstone on April 4.

Mr Brandreth has appeared on a number of TV shows including QI, Have I Got News For You and Room 101.

His show explores the English language and will be performed at the Hazlitt Theatre. Tickets are £20.50.

Visit www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk to book

Sounds of Bollywood

THE Bollywood Brass Band will be taking to the stage in Folkestone later this month.

Featuring drums and horns, the band will play a selection of hits from Indian films.

They will be performing at the Folkestone Quarterhouse on March 25.

The show will be starting at 7.30pm.

For more information or to book tickets visit www.quarterhouse.co.uk.

A comedy of manners

NOEL Cowards's 'comedy of manners' Hay Fever will be performed at the Woodville, Gravesend, on June 9.

It tells the story of Judith Bliss, a famous retired actress, and her unconventional family - all of which have invited people to stay for the weekend.

It is directed by Bryan Hands and will start at 7.30pm.

To book visit www.woodville.co.uk.

Headliners announced

SUEDE, Kodaline and Dizzee Rascal have been confirmed as headliners at this summer's Forgotten Fields festival.

The event will take place at Eridge Park, near Tunbridge Wells, and runs from August 5 to 7.

The festival is promoted by From the Fields. Tickets are on sale now from £105 for an adult weekend pass.

Visit www.forgottenfields.co.uk to book.

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Cruising around the small screen

TRAVEL REVIEW: Mexico

by Roger Crow

“WE thought cruising was for the newlyweds, overfed or nearly dead,” remarks one of the passengers featured on new ITV fly-on-the-wall show *The Cruise*.

Admittedly, I once thought the same thing.

But in 2011, I caught the sailing bug and realised how wrong I was.

Princess Cruises celebrated their recent 50th anniversary with a host of new facilities on board their fleet of luxury ships and the company is also the subject of a new reality TV documentary, which started on Thursday (March 3).

Keen to find out what happens when the cameras stop rolling, I've joined a week's voyage with Ruby Princess along the Mexican Riviera.

Alberto and Cecilia, who both appear in *The Cruise*, are two of the 3,000 passengers (and 1,000-plus crew) joining me.

They tell me how they became more than just ships passing in the night - or day - after getting together on the Royal Princess. There's more magic between them than a Hogwarts convention.

But I soon embark on a love affair of my own when I dine in Curtis Stone's posh new eatery Share, one of the many new features on the ship.

Curtis - Australia's answer to Gordon Ramsay - certainly knows his onions. All the dishes are a delight, as are those served up in the Crown Grill. A fine filet mignon, delicious sides and hyper-attentive waiters ensure a terrific evening.

Meat lovers who prefer something lighter should try Princess's other new dining attraction, The Salty Dog gastropub.

Their Ernesto mini burgers and



CRUISE: Princess Cruises offer a seven-day cruise on the Ruby Princess, departing from Los Angeles

fries go down a treat.

While these eateries involve paying extra on top of the cruise fee, Princess' all-inclusive main buffet area, Horizon Court, is so good, some may never want to go anywhere else.

As we sail past Baja California, towards Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan and Cabo San Lucas, I take the opportunity to trial Ruby's new entertainment facilities.

Movies Under The Stars takes place

on the top deck and becomes a guilty pleasure, while Magic To Do is a tantalizing mash-up of Stephen Schwartz songs with dazzling costumes and impressive trickery.

Passengers even have the chance to shine in the spotlight as part of *The Voice Of The Ocean*, an engaging take on the TV talent search.

Admittedly, there are mild cosmetic blemishes on Princess Ruby's tiara: some of the cabin decor is chintzy and



the Movies Under The Stars screen could do with some TLC. But the pros far outweigh the cons.

The excursions, for example, are thoroughly enjoyable.

I join an impromptu walking tour of Puerto Vallarta, where Arnie Schwarzenegger shot *Predator* 30 years ago. A day later in Mazatlan, I tour the fascinating city on a hop on, hop off bus, stopping off to watch cliff divers and eat nachos.

TRAVEL FACTS

ROGER Crow was a guest of Princess Cruises, who offer a seven-day cruise on the Ruby Princess to the Mexican Riviera from £538 per person including meals, 24-hour room service and on-board entertainment.

The cruise will be departing from Los Angeles on October 15. The fare excludes flights. Call 0843 374 2403 for more details.

Of course, not every port is big enough to accommodate a vessel the size of a town, so my trip to and from Cabo San Lucas via tender proves to be more entertaining than the port itself.

Although our whale watching tour is a damp squib due to reluctant stars, it scarcely matters. The crew ensures there is rarely a dull moment.

Regardless of what port you arrive in, I understand why many become addicted to life on board - the Princess bubble is hugely appealing.

Whether throwing shapes in nightclub Skywalkers, or having muscular knots untied at the excellent Lotus Spa, there's plenty of scope for indulging yourself.

At the gym, there's something very surreal about watching old sitcom *The Love Boat* while working out, getting off a treadmill and walking down a swaying corridor like I've had too many margaritas.

'Come Back New' screams the tagline for Princess' latest campaign throughout the trip.

I'm not too sure about that, but whether travelling out of Southampton, Los Angeles or any port on a Princess vessel, you are bound to come back happier.

Film Reviews by Damon Smith



TRUTH (15, 125 mins) Drama

AFTER the Academy Awards bestowed Best Picture upon *Spotlight*, a real-life drama about the power of investigative journalism to expose corruption, *Truth* opens a different chapter on the media and its practices.

Writer-director James Vanderbilt's picture recreates the political firestorm that erupted when CBS News' esteemed programme *60 Minutes* publicly called into question the military record of US President George W Bush.

Key pieces of paperwork, used by *60 Minutes* as links in a chain of evidence, were subsequently discredited and a key witness confessed he had lied about their provenance.

Heads rolled at CBS including producer Mary Mapes, who recalled her version of events in the memoir *Truth And Duty*, and President George W Bush was inaugurated for a second term at the White House.

Truth distills turbulent events from this period into an engrossing portrait of flawed ambition.

In April 2004, Mary Mapes, producer of *60 Minutes*, gathers together a crack team including

journalism professor Lucy Scott and researcher Mike Smith to dissect a potentially explosive story.

Lieutenant Colonel Roger Charles has acquired George W Bush's Texas Air National Guard file and it's curiously thin.

"You're telling me the President of the United States may have gone AWOL from the military for over a year?" gasps Lucy after Mike gives an overview of his findings.

The journalists dig deeper and they make contact with Lieutenant Colonel Bill Burkett, who claims to have some of the missing documents in his possession.

Understandably, the ailing veteran is reluctant to give testimony on camera for fear of the repercussions.

"We're *60 Minutes*. We're the gold standard and we can help you," Mary assures him.

With the paperwork in place,



anchorman Dan Rather headlines one of the most explosive editions of *60 Minutes* on September 8, 2004, less than two months before the presidential elections.

Triumph turns to incredulity when bloggers pick holes in the *60 Minutes* story, forcing Andrew Heyward, President of CBS News, to call into question the journalistic integrity of Mary and her team.

Truth is a fascinating, if somewhat simplistic, recreation of a behind-the-scenes battle that ended the careers of award-winning journalists behind and in front of the cameras. Cate Blanchett and Robert Redford deliver compelling performances as the TV producer and news anchorman, whose reputations are stained by their involvement in the expose.

AWARD-WINNING herb grower and RHS ambassador Jenna McVicar comes from an era when you really didn't go to the doctor unless you were seriously ill. If you had a nasty cough, mouth ulcers, upset tummy or other minor ailment, Ms McVicar's mother would go into the garden, pick out a number of herbs, make teas and tinctures from them and wait for them to work their magic.

And this is what has given the multi-award-winning plantswoman the inspiration for The Modern Apothecary, her first show garden at RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2016.

The idea for the garden came about over a lunch when McVicar and her friend, a GP, were discussing how people go to the doctor for an immediate fix and no longer use their own natural remedies.

"Herbs are gentle, but might take longer. As a child, I was brought up in a family where you never went to the doctor unless you were seriously ill. So if you had a sore throat, Mum always made the tea out of sage.

"I wondered, 'Could we square the circle between medicine and us?'"

She's hoping gardeners will start to grow the types of healing herbs she features in her show garden, and is also providing some inspiring design ideas for wellbeing in The Modern Apothecary.

A cobbled pathway running through a large circle of planting is designed so that if you walk on it



HERBS: The plans for Jenna McVicar's modern apothecary garden

A garden's herbal happiness

bare-foot, you will give yourself some reflexology in the process.

In each corner of her show garden is a hawthorn tree, but they aren't placed there just to be visually pleasing, says Ms McVicar, who has won 62 gold medals as a floral marquee exhibitor at the show.

"If you look into any research about Rudolf Steiner - an Austrian

philosopher - you realise you never have a corner if you're feeling depressed," she said.

"You always can flow round a garden. It gives you space to move. If you have a corner, you have to make a decision and that makes you anxious."

The hawthorns are also known as 'bread and cheese' because you can eat the leaf, which is good for

strengthening the heart.

A large central circle of planting is split in two by the cobbled path, while two seats are strategically placed near scented plants within the herb garden. A water feature provides a soothing focal point, while the whole garden is overseen by a sculpture of Asclepius' staff, which is the symbol of healing.

Other plants include hops (a sleep aid) and roses (rose hips for vitamin C), while the path is lined with fragrant lavender, for relaxation.

St John's Hospice in London is sponsoring the garden. It will be transferred there after the show.

RHS Chelsea Flower Show runs from May 24 to 28. For details visit www.rhs.org.uk/chelsea.



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Churchill would question EU

THAT Sir Winston's victory jubilations [KoS, letters, 21.02] should be interpreted as an all-time recipe for European unity, without question, based upon the horrors of a world war from which freedom and brotherhood were objects to be resurrected, is to leave undisputed what would have undoubtedly been his positive thinking in the light of subsequent developments.

Much water has flowed under the bridge since Sir Winston's time, and so much that is contrary to his reasoning, that I cannot believe he would have been party to happenings which are clearly contrary to all he held dear, in particular our sovereignty. It is now more than half a century since Sir Winston's passing, and his vision of a world where people could live in freedom, peace and safety, is not disputed by those who look for a land where this is not spoiled by a mix of diluted freedom and restrictive practices - however disguised.

Never let it be forgotten that once we stood alone; the hordes of those who subscribed to an unthinkable ideology were at our gates; yet we stood firm. The continent of Europe is ever in debt to Great Britain for its very existence. This could indeed be a reflection of our finest hour.

David Alston,
Shortlands

Don't believe the career MPs

WHETHER you believe that we should be in the EU or not, you should be very suspicious of the honesty and self interest of any MP who says that David Cameron got anything of any value from his negotiations in Europe, particularly if the MP was previously Euro sceptic.

If undecided, just ask yourself: is this MP putting his own career before the good of his country?

Paul Varley,
Folkestone

Is era of austerity set to continue?

IN recent times you have kindly published letters in which I sought to add some realism to the claim that the economy, including the Kent economy, is in a state of benign recovery due to the austerity policies of the govern-

LETTER OF THE WEEK



EU has never worked and we need to get out

THE EU is a profligate organisation that has cost this country billions and the claim that we 'get out more than we put in' has recently been shown to be untrue.

The EU is an organisation that has decimated our fishing industry; has an agriculture policy that allows our government to pay subsidies to farmers for not actually planting anything (and that's supposed to eliminate 'distortions' in the market - what a nonsense) but won't allow our government to even reduce VAT on tampons, let alone do away with the tax altogether. It's an organisation that continues to interfere and intrude into pretty well every aspect of our lives, with no obvious benefit at all.

Now we have immigration all over Europe so out of control it's left all politicians in the EU floundering. It is they who introduced the Schengen 'no borders' agreement, which has led to immigration on such a scale that even the most

liberal countries have been forced to introduce restrictions in an endeavour to regain some degree of stability. We now have parts of the EU erecting barbed wire fencing and Macedonia, a country which has been seeking to become a member for many years, using tear gas!

All of this demonstrates that when 'backed into a corner' each country will do what it believes to be in its own national interests.

I am old enough to have voted to leave way back in 1975 and all the years since have not changed my view. Indeed, if anything, what I have witnessed in the intervening years has only reinforced my view that we would be much better off out of it.

I would recommend reading the excellent piece from MP Gordon Henderson, MP which appeared in KoS last week. Quite the best reasoned arguments for leaving that I've read in a very long time.

Christopher Hudson-Gool
Maidstone

ment, which are passed down to the Kent County Council.

Previously, I have pointed out the low levels of productivity, the lack of investment and innovation, the skills deficit and the under use of the European market for exports.

Now, we have the IMF (International Monetary Fund) calling for a change of direction.

On top of the issues around productivity, the IMF is drawing attention to the worsening balance of payments, the level of personal debt and the risk to the UK economy due to the impending referendum.

What the IMF is saying is that the rebalancing of the public finances has gone far enough and there is a need for infrastructure investment to fuel growth.

The danger is that we go into a further down turn, which would only mean a weakening of tax incomes, pressure on public finances and even less chance of reaching the arbitrary deficit reduction target.

In the mean time more and more people are beginning to realise that austerity is something that hits us all. Road maintenance in Kent is going to be cut, which is both

socially and economically damaging, whilst elderly and vulnerable people are going to get a vastly reduced standard of care service.

Roger Truelove,
Labour spokesman for economic development on KCC

Blood scandal is utter disgrace

IT is deeply shocking to read about the continuing failure to provide justice and compensation to those people affected by contaminated blood and blood products in the 1970s and 80s [KoS ad nauseum].

The fact that the Hippocratic Oath states doctors should 'do no harm' makes the damage inflicted on people's health by health professionals particularly horrific.

The fact that, all these years later, the victims and their families are still being denied both the truth about the matter and adequate financial compensation for the way in which their lives have been wrecked, is totally unacceptable.

Dr M MacGrath,
Tunbridge Wells

Manston airport must fly off now

I COULD not agree more with your letter of the week in KoS last weekend.

Manston has tried, and failed, to work as an airport. It's not a public site, it's in private ownership, and therefore rather than see more money go to waste by reviving it for planes, why not allow the site to be turned into something which provides jobs and homes for the local area?

Jason Turner,
Sandwich

Demelza praise for fundraisers

ON BEHALF of the babies, children, young people and families who need to use Demelza Hospice Care for Children's services I would like to say a big thank you to Cranbrook Operatic and Dramatic Society (CODS). It put on a performance of the children's classic, Sleeping Beauty.

I was delighted to receive a cheque for £1,200 from James Hanaway, chairman. It is thanks to the generosity of groups like CODS that we are able to continue to help children with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions and their families

Leila Ilkhan,
Community fundraiser, Demelza

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- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.



Kearsney Abbey by Rita Keatley from Canterbury

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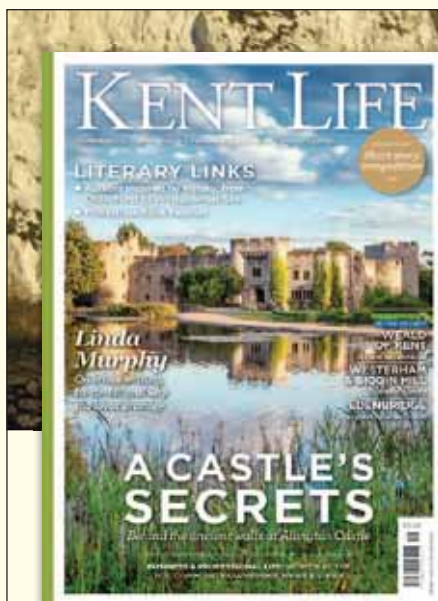
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INCLUDED: 3 Free drinks per person per night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • 60s themed entertainment programme • 3 nights standard en-suite chalet - upgrade available • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners



By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

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THE DS3: Always a hit with UK buyers....

DS3 takes wing for its new brand

FIRST DRIVE: Stylish arrival of DS3 hatch and Cabrio severs the final connection between Citroën and the now standalone DS premium brand...

CURIOUS that the DS3 was both the oldest and last DS model to lose its Citroën chevrons after the launch of the new breakaway DS premium brand.

But perhaps not when the bigger and slower selling DS4 and 5 models needed the facelift and upweight more quickly.

Whether they now sell better is perhaps irrelevant anyway, firstly because Chinese buyers seemingly can't get enough of anything with a DS badge and, secondly, because the DS3 has always sold well in the UK.

In fact, this is the DS3's biggest market, outselling the French homeland, and likely to continue doing so judging by the new model – priced from £13,995 for the hatchback or £16,295 for the Cabrio.

Both are attractive prices for a car touted as premium, delivering classy customisation/personalisation options on a par with the BMW Mini, and made more eye-catching by the deep DS grille and much-vaunted chrome 'wings' extending beneath the headlights.

The car has also gained aggressive faux air scoops housing LED running lights, contributing to a braver and cleaner look than the former and more bulbous Citroën front end.

Inside, buyers get a new seven-inch touchscreen and equally tempting interior options, notably DS's



CHOICE: The DS3 comes in tin top and rolltop versions

gorgeous Nappa 'watchstrap' leather seating.

For all its style the DS3 also remains one of the more practical small cars for the image-conscious; even the rolltop Cabrio can carry five and has a decent boot.

And it is a driver's car when you want it to be, handling better than I remembered though DS

people at the launch event insisted there had been no chassis tweaks.

Engine choice is also excellent, though I would avoid the lumbering 120bhp 1.6-litre BlueHDi diesel option. The zingy new 130bhp 1.2 direct injection petrol turbo is fun and makes for more enjoyment.

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Can this be the greatest MX-5 yet?

Whichever of the two engines you choose, Mazda's latest offering proves the best affordable sports car you can buy is even better value now, writes **Steve Loader**

NEVER mind recent cold and rain, let's look ahead to warmer weather and, possibly, top down motoring.

And there cannot be many better opentop cars at any price than the latest and possibly greatest Mazda MX-5.

It's the fourth generation of Mazda's flag waver and nods to the Japanese brand's future and past.

It epitomises Mazda's brilliant Skyactiv technology, tuning driver enjoyment, boosting power to weight ratio, and slashing consumption and emissions.

This also allows the new Mk 4 (from £18,495) to echo the scale, weight and pleasure of the legendary Mk 1, retaining that front engine/rear-driven balance, yet still able to bear the best tech and safety now demanded by consumers and legislation.

More aggressive styling makes it look bigger in pictures, causing a quick mental re-calibration when viewed in the metal.

But while you feel snug in the cockpit – a visual trick enhanced by door cappings curving in towards the immaculately arranged dashboard – the car is as spacious as



before, making it comfy for long distance business trips, sporty expeditions or weekends away.

As ever, the genuinely watertight roof, is raised and lowered manually in seconds, and with even greater ease – flick a clip and flip it back, or vice versa.

The big question is: 130bhp 1.5-litre

or 159bhp 2.0-litre engine? The former is the essence of the original, while the latter delivers the most performance-orientated MX-5 to date.

But the sheer affordability of the 1.5 as tested, echoes the original MX-5 ethos: a British-style sports car that's cheap to buy, yet comes with bulletproof reliability and a user-



friendly hood that doesn't leak.

The 1.5 engine, already familiar in the Mazda range, is free-revving and punchy, propelling the lightly loaded Mk4 to 0-62mph in 8.3 seconds.

A slick-shifting close-ratio six-speed manual 'box comes as standard across the MX-5 line-up and underlines how, as ever, this is a

Mazda MX-5 1.5i SE-L Nav

Price:	from £19,845
Driving appeal:	★★★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Toyota GT86/Subaru BRZ

car to harmonise with, its nicely judged steering and balanced chassis constantly feeding back as you swoop along a clear winding road.

If you would happily pay more for such pleasure, the 160bhp 2.0-litre (from £20,095) beckons, with beefed up rear suspension and 0-62mph in 7.3 seconds.

It adds £1,600 to the price, but further rebuts the 'hairstresser's car' nonsense spouted at the MX-5.

But how's this for an independent word on the MX-5's standing? An experienced driver, MX-5 owner and friend was delighted to borrow a Ferrari after calling in a favour, but added:

"It was lovely, but after a while, I thought about its foibles, the silly money tied up in it, the envy/jealousy factor and so on, and then saw an MX-5 approaching... I realised I'd rather be driving that." Praise indeed.

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Top tips on making sure you invest in the right car

CHOICE: What's it's to be? A space-efficient MPV like the Fiat 500L or Renault Scenic; versatile supermini like the Skoda Fabia, or a stylish yet practical estate car like the Hyundai i40 Tourer?



Small cars

Tend to have lower advance payments, running costs and CO2 emissions than larger vehicles. Two-three door cars generally have wider doors with larger opening angles, which makes access easier, but fitting into and opening/closing the door in narrow parking spaces can be harder. Four-five door cars benefit from superior back seat access - useful if you often have more than one passenger.

Medium cars

Are often sold as



hatchbacks and will have a slightly bigger boot than a standard small car. The same door arguments apply as for small cars.

Family cars

Family cars are large 4-door saloons or 5-door hatchbacks and are considerably larger than medium sized cars. Hatchbacks have more boot capacity.

Crossovers

As the name implies, these versatile models merge several sectors - family hatchbacks and (see later) MPVs and SUVs - and tend to sit higher on the road and can be easier to get in and out of, depending on disability.

Estate cars

Usually longer than a standard saloon or hatchback, with useful space for mobility aids in the boot, but this can add to the car's bulk so make sure you check it out with a test drive before committing.

Multi-purpose vehicles (MPV)

Ranging from small to large, MPVs can seat up to nine.

The seats are higher, with more headroom, legroom and width. Some have large sliding side doors, which improve access for those with disabilities.

4x4 and Sport Utility Vehicles (SUV)

The term '4x4' is usually used to describe vehicles designed for off-road use, which generally have higher ground clearance.

Until recently, all 4x4s had 4-wheel drive, but many people now buy for the SUV styling and opt for a front-wheel drive version to save fuel.

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs)

WAVs are cars converted to car-

ry passengers travelling in their wheelchair or those who wish to drive from a wheelchair.

WAVs may be best if you have trouble getting in and out of the car from your wheelchair and would prefer to remain in it when travelling as a passenger. WAVs come in different sizes and have many standard features. The Motability website has a specific WAV Search.



Must-do steps on the test drive

MAP out a campaign - drive your chosen candidates soon after one another to allow more accurate comparisons.

Allow time - you need enough to drive in all situations: town traffic, on the motorway or a fast road, and on less well-maintained rural roads. An hour should be sufficient, as long as you avoid getting stuck in a rush hour jam.

What are you looking for? - seat and ride comfort, how refined it is in terms of engine, wind, tyre and mechanical noise. And especially...

Do you like the controls? - many carmakers are going their own way in search of the best ergonomics or human interaction with the controls, but they don't suit everyone. If need be, can they be adapted to your needs?

Make it a family outing - it can be a painful process of 'are we there yet?' proportions, but try to get as many of the other would-be car users involved in the test drive - drivers and non-drivers - as well as the disabled person, and is it practical for him or her to use or will major adaptations be needed?

Is it the right spec? - try to get a test car as close to the one you are interested in, even if you have to wait a few days for the dealer to arrange it or have to go to another dealership. Chances are the dealer will have a higher spec model than the one you want, it's then easier to be seduced by the car.



TEST: From the compact and stylish Renault Clio supermini to the roomy Skoda Octavia estate





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I AM GIVING NOTICE THAT The Kent County Council as Highway Authority for the County of Kent propose to make an application to the Magistrates' sitting at Canterbury Magistrates' Court on 19 April 2016 at 10:00 for an Order under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 to extinguish highway rights on the grounds that they are unnecessary on land at Underhill Road, Diggate Camp, Shorncliffe, Folkestone as edged red on the plan on deposit.

A copy of the draft order and the plan referred to are on deposit, and can be seen during normal office hours, at the main reception of The Kent County Council at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ.

Any person to whom this Notice has been given or who uses the highway specified or who would be aggrieved by the making of the Order may appear before the Magistrates' Court to raise an objection or make a representation on the application. Any person intending to appear before the Magistrates' Court at the hearing of the application is requested to inform David McKnight by post to Legal Services, The Kent County Council, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ, or by email david.mcknight@kent.gov.uk before 9 April 2016 quoting reference number LS/21/106057/608.

If you require further information or would like to discuss this matter, please contact David McKnight using the contact details shown above.

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'My job not done until we're safe'

Margate boss Nikki Bull has overseen a fine run of form

Football

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

MARGATE boss Nikki Bull says there is no danger of complacency setting in as his side approach the business end of the season.

The Gate have undergone something of a mini-overhaul in terms of personnel this week, with defender Sam Rents leaving for Whitehawk and striker Greg Cundle coming in on loan from Gillingham.

Bull says it's important to keep the squad fresh and make sure his players are on their toes.

He told KoS: "We've brought in Greg because we were a bit light up front but we actually haven't had as many ins and outs as some of the other teams around us.

"We had players that were struggling to get game time so we agreed to let them go but it's good to have that freshness about the place."

Bull was appointed manager following the dismissal of Terry Brown just before Christmas, with the team languishing in the relegation zone.

Since then Margate have exceeded expectations and are now hovering around the play-off places, with an outside chance of securing promotion from the National League South.

But Bull refuses to rest on his laurels, and was coy on talk of his own future.

"I was appointed until the end of the season, and my remit was to keep us up and my job's not done until we've mathematically done that," he said.

"We've done well in a short space of



BOSS: Nikki Bull will not rest until the end of the season

time, we won seven out of eight and when you go on a run like that it's difficult to stop.

"The results have justified the faith they've shown in me so that's really positive.

"But there's no danger of us being complacent - a lot of the players' con-

tracts run out in May so they want to fight and prove that they belong here.

"At the end of the season we'll sit down and assess how I've done but right now we just need to take each game as it comes and hope we can finish the campaign as strongly as possible."

Lawrence fitter than ever after injury woes

Boxing

MIDDLEWEIGHT boxer Oliver Lawrence insists his injury woes are behind him and he is 100 per cent focused on his return to the ring next month.

Lawrence, 23, from Maidstone, will be back in action at the Epsom Downs Racecourse in Surrey on April 9, when he collides with highly experienced Portsmouth veteran Paul Morby in the Queensbury Boxing League.

Last seen in the ring back in October, when he recorded a comprehensive points win over Brighton's Chris Sharpe, Lawrence was moving towards a title elimination shot but a fractured wrist in sparring halted his progress.



READY: Oliver Lawrence

Now though, he's ready for his next battle, saying: "Getting injured in the build up to the February fight

was frustrating, but now that the injury has recovered I'm really focussing on the next fight.

"Paul Morby is a tough fight for me as he's fought the likes of world champion Liam Smith and world title challenger Frank Buglioni, so I need to be fully focussed as one mistake could cost me.

"Training wise I've been really pushing the intensity of things hard and making sure I'm going to be the fittest that I have ever been, so there is no chance of me overlooking Morby and slipping up."

On the packed undercard of the show is Maidstone light-middleweight Mark Hiscott, who only took up the sport six months ago, but impressed promoters so much when sparring that he has been selected to appear on the Epsom show.

Sport Shorts

» Email sports@kosmedia.co.uk or call Tom Pyman on 01233653477

Hamstring tear keeps Dack out for six weeks

GILLINGHAM'S injury troubles continued this week after top scorer Bradley Dack was ruled out for six weeks with a hamstring tear.

The midfielder, who has struck 15 times this season, had to be replaced during last Saturday's defeat to Chesterfield after pulling a muscle, and had a scan early this week.

Boss Justin Edinburgh said: "It's a hamstring injury which is a real blow, and unfortunately things aren't going for us at the minute.

"It's not too good, it's a grade two [tear], so we're probably looking at six weeks [on the sidelines].

"We have to overcome that - be resolute, be strong, George Williams is a very good replacement."

It follows recent injuries to defender John Egan and captain Doug Loft - both of whom are expected to be out for a number of weeks - and a tricky patch for the Gills in which they have suffered three consecutive defeats in League One.



OUT: Bradley Dack



STONEBRIDGE: Home of Ebbsfleet United

Goalkeeper Ashmore joins Fleet title charge

EBBSFLEET United have completed the signing of Gosport Borough goalkeeper Nathan Ashmore.

The highly-rated 26-year-old joins for an undisclosed fee, having signed a two-and-a-half-year contract for Boro in February 2015.

Fleet boss Daryl McMahon said of his new recruit: "Nathan's obviously a top keeper, that much is clear to any supporter at this level.

"He wants to play, he hasn't come here to sit around and it's an opportunity for me to strengthen a position with a fantastic player to try to help us win the league.

"Brandon Hall has been terrific this year, he's a young goalkeeper and he's learning all the time.

"Bringing Nathan in is nothing against Brandon who's still got a big future at this club and in the game."

Cox departs from Whitstable

IAN Cox has stepped down as manager of Whitstable Town after a series of disappointing results in the Ryman League South.

A spokesperson for the club said: "He felt he could do no more after 10 losses from 13 games.

"The club has accepted his decision considering the recent poor run of performances and wish him all the best for the future.

"The chairman and committee feel the club is a sleeping giant and will continue to implement the new football structure which will allow us to make the right appointment in due course.

"Until that decision has been made, Colin Patching and Bob Reardon will take up the reins and steer the first team in a positive direction."

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